

The ROSICRUCIAN FORUM

A PRIVATE PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS OF AMORC,
THE ROSICRUCIAN ORDER

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FACING THE SHADOWS

(Awarded First Prize in the Paris "Herald,"
during World War I)

When I behold the tense and tragic night
Shrouding the earth in vague symbolic gloom,
And when I think that ere my fancy's flight
Has reached the portals of the inner room
Where knightly ghosts, guarding the sacred ark
Of brave romance, through me shall sing again,
Death may engulf me in eternal dark—
Still, I have no regret nor poignant pain,

For

Better in one ecstatic, epic day
To strike a blow for GLORY and for TRUTH,
With ardent, singing heart to toss away
In FREEDOM'S holy cause my eager youth,
Than bear, as weary years pass one by one,
The knowledge of a sacred task undone.

By Private William I. Grundish,
U. S. Army in France, World War I

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Greetings!



Dear Fratres and Sorores:

The attitude of mind has always had its directors. Like those cardinal directions of the compass, they are four in number; namely, they are *forward*, *retrogression*, and to the *right* and to the *left*. Thus there are always those who by their thinking and by the policies which they form are definitely constructive and creative. Such an attitude is obviously progressive or the *forward direction*. Conversely, there are those who, for various reasons, sometimes unaccountable, or because life has caused them to be embittered, are *retrogressive* in their thinking. They are continually opposing the existing status, thinking illogically, and seem to find a perverted enjoyment in destruction and obstruction.

Of the four directions in which thought and subsequent action may move, the *right* and *left* are most commonly known. The rightist is a conservative. He is inclined to the influence of tradition and is reluctant to truncate tested and approved customs for even the most promising new opportunities. The rightist is quite often an obstacle to progress, or at least a delaying factor by his punctilious attitude of weighing everything by what has been done. However, there is much to be said in defense of the rightist. He is not maliciously trying to retard progress. His is an attitude of caution and a reluctance of chancing the loss of what has been gained and proven to have merit, on the *probability* that something better may be obtained. The rightist, therefore, is a temporizing influence upon extreme radicalism and often a preserver of past accomplishments. There is and must always be a rightist movement or attitude of mind in every well-balanced society, whatever its objectives.

On the other hand, the *leftists* like to style themselves *liberals*. The average leftist, however, is of the opinion that progress consists in just freeing oneself from certain rightist ideals or customs. It is a mistaken concep-

tion, for analogy, that jumping off the boat into the middle of the stream means that by such a radical departure you are going to make swifter and easier passage. There is a vast distinction between a true liberal attitude and a radical one. We do not seek freedom unless we are fully aware or have good reason to believe that we are *fettered*. How does one know that he is fettered? It is first necessary to have in mind some end or objective which you cannot obtain because of *restraint*. Only when you are conscious of a restraint, does the idea of freedom arise. No man would call himself a prisoner, even if behind heavy bars, if he had no desire to be elsewhere. Since he has no desires, they could not be opposed by anything.

The real liberal, therefore, is not one who deliberately sets up ideals or courses of action just to be contrary to existing standards. Such a person is nothing more than a *dissenter*, and an agitator. His ends are obviously not constructive. He is not intending to supplement or supplant, but to tear down the existing. *The true liberal* is one who wants to be free of that which he believes encumbers him from attaining that which he thinks will serve, not just himself, but all others better than an existing thing or condition. Therefore, the true liberal devotes most of his energies and talents to the promulgation of his own leftist ends. He lets his objective itself become competitive with the conservative rightist. He does not devote himself to tearing down, assaulting, and abusing the rightist. After all, such tactics, even if successful, would not actually establish the leftist's own ends. Consequently, many self-styled liberals are nothing more than dissenters and destructive. They conduct acrimonious campaigns by word of mouth, or in print, against established activities and enterprises, and yet they offer absolutely nothing superior or even equal to that which they attack. Such false campaigns can and *often do* deceive many persons by their strident voices.

against this or that. A true liberal is known by his championing of that which he wishes to replace the existing. If one is continually attacking the existing but never presenting in an equally prominent way what he has to offer as its successor, you will know him as a dissenter and agitator, travelling under the subterfuge of a liberal.

Today it is said that we are on the threshold of great political, economic, and religious changes—that this is a transitory period. This may or may not be so. In fact, every decade has been transitory, insofar as some important aspect of society is concerned. Every great war compels transition because it stamps out and destroys much of what existed, and in building anew, we are all inclined to build differently. True liberals or leftists realize that this is the time that is opportune for them to further the presentation of their distinctly different plans and they are intelligently and *constructively*, as well as sincerely expounding them. Consequently, the public mind, conscious of changes that must come as a result of the necessary era of reconstruction, is focused upon that which professes to be liberal and leftist. This situation affords the dissenters and agitators an unprecedented opportunity in our times. They launch attack after attack, in bitterness and without any purpose other than to exercise their malice and bias against that which displeases them, as individual or prejudiced groups—and all in the name of *liberalism*. They buy time over national radio hookup and start a series of scurrilous attacks, skillfully worded to avoid the laws of defamation of character. They issue little pulp newspapers of four or six sheets, for which they solicit subscribers or even give the sheets away to further their purpose of attack on established institutions or customs which they personally dislike.

An examination of such periodicals will often show column after column of vituperous assault upon well known individuals, organizations, or corporations. One will have to hunt to find what is offered as a substitute or replacement for what they seek to tear down. The pages of such periodicals are replete with the words or phrase, *liberal movement*, or with the phrase, *we liberals*

of America, etc., etc. These periodicals have and hold a considerable following, which is not difficult to understand. First, most of their readers have, as we have tried to point out, confused dissension with true liberalism. Second, unfortunately, there is a perverse streak in human character, to which we all of us at times are subject. This is jealousy of power and of success. There are those who are so psychologically constituted that they derive a sadistic enjoyment from seeing that which is prominent and influential become a target for attack. The nefarious desire blinds their reason. When in these false *liberal* periodicals, they read of attacks on established and successful institutions, they do not inquire behind the statements made. Their sense of justice is stemmed. They never once inquire into the validity of the statements. Even a cursory investigation, like a resort to an encyclopedia, would often prove that the charges were mendacious. The fact is, such readers, because of a peculiar quirk of mind, want to believe the *worst* about that of which they are envious.

There are also individuals or groups who lack constructive plans or the ability to so develop one; thus they are incapable, in the manner of a true liberal, of attracting attention to themselves by their own merit. A number of such gain prominence by the perverse method of sallying forth as liberals and attacking all of that which is prominent and thus gaining the attention of those who like such attacks or who actually misunderstand and think them to be liberal views.

Be *cautious*, be *intelligent*, be *analytical!* When you read articles in periodicals (no matter how extensively they are circulated), which purport to be liberal and which resort to attack without offering equally as sound substitutes as that which they attack, *investigate them*. Do not accept as factual mere statements appearing therein. Do not let your judgment be imposed upon. Do not unwittingly give your support to *smear campaigns* and destructive elements of society.

AMORC, the Rosicrucian Order, has only recently been subject again to such abuses, by several of these purported and false liberal publications, one of which we know has

certain selfish motives. In this periodical, AMORC was accused of being a Fascist organization. Every Rosicrucian member and student knows how diligently we try to keep our literature free from political partisanship, and how ridiculous such a charge is in fact. The basis of this unwarranted attack is that about ten or twelve years ago one Wm. Dudley Pelley (now accused by the United States Government as a leader of a subversive movement), wrote a book which we recommended in the *Rosicrucian Digest*. This attack cleverly stopped at that point of explanation. It did not explain that the book we recommended had to do strictly with *metaphysics* and not politics. It did not explain that at that time Wm. Dudley Pelley was not guilty of subversive conduct, and it did not explain that the content of Pelley's book or his article on metaphysics was printed at about the same time in *The American Magazine*. The whole insidious implication left for the readers was that Pelley *then* was, as Pelley *now* is, and that therefore we were recommending a book which supported his Fascist views. The authors of this attack knew differently. They knew that their other references were just as exaggerated, and were only part truths, but they also knew that the average reader would not investigate further and would accept the statements as fact. However, they must have been deluged with letters of righteous indignation from Rosicrucian members—for many wrote stating they would write and some sent copies of their letters of protest to the periodical.

Also a magazine, with a very futuristic title, apparently issued under the guise of liberalism, wrote an attack on "cults and isms," which sought certain advantages under the pretext of religion. It was obvious that several of those mentioned were not truly religious societies, though they were so incorporated and so represented themselves. However, it accused AMORC of being a religious movement, that is, AMORC was grouped in with these as a religious sect. Now, it is well known to every member that AMORC is not incorporated as a religious organization or church, and has repeatedly referred to itself in all of its literature as a *non-religious* organization. Reference to our incorporation articles by anyone,

or by a member of the staff of that magazine, or to any of the leading encyclopedias and to histories, on ROSICRUCIANISM, in the public libraries, would have revealed the truth; namely, that the Rosicrucian Order is *not a religious organization*, and, therefore, should not have been included in such an article. The article was written in a supercilious style and with a false liberal pretension. Many Rosicrucian members wrote letters of protest about the mendacious statements contained in the article with respect to AMORC. One frater in Florida wrote a most effective protest and elicited from the Editor in Chief a letter of apology, which we quote in part:

"I was very naturally distressed to read your analysis of the article, 'Cults of the Left Behind,' and in the January issue of *blank* there will be a statement that I am sure the theosophical group (*theosophical group* in this sense meaning a group devoted to the philosophy and study of God and spiritual matters) will definitely approve of.

"On my own behalf, I would like you to be aware of the following: I sent the article, 'Cults of the Left Behinds' back to the authors to have certain changes made, when I first read it, but when it was finally returned, I was away from the office and relied on the judgment of an editor who is no longer with the magazine. Mr. *Blank* has recently joined the editorial staff of *blank*. Because he is a man of spiritual dignity and integrity, I can assure you that there will no longer be anything published of an upsetting or dubious nature in *blank*."

Fraternally,

RALPH M. LEWIS,

Imperator.

What Are Accidents?

The New York Minor Lodge of AMORC conducts a monthly forum. The members propound a number of questions concerning the Rosicrucian teachings, and matters relating to their principles. It is an excellent activity and one which should be encouraged in all AMORC lodges and chapters. One of the questions in their last forum was pro-

vocative of considerable thought. It was: "What is the mystical and metaphysical explanation of so-called accidents?" It was suggested that we, too, consider the subject in our FORUM, which we shall now do, with pleasure.

Let us first realize that every philosophical topic, or one that has a speculative basis, cannot always be approached *mystically*. Unfortunately, the word *mystical* has come to be confused with the mysterious, or that which is abstract or abstruse. Mysticism and metaphysics are both branches or aspects of philosophy. As related to the above question, I believe that metaphysics or the doctrine of first causes could be stretched to apply, but not very aptly.

In ordinary experience, what do we mean by accident? How, in fact, do we recognize one? A sudden event occurs, affecting an individual. The cause of it is either *unpremeditated* or *inordinate*. Thereupon the event is referred to as an accident. We are all quite conscious of causes. In fact, we are so constituted that we seek to find one for every effect. If an effect cannot be related to any apparent intelligence—that is, if what occurred was not instituted by some person intentionally—we begin to suspect an accident. If further investigation discloses that the event was precipitated by a factor or factors which are beyond the bounds of what we consider the *orderly* arrangement of causes and effects, we are then positive in our assertion that it is an accident. From this, we can see that accidents do not escape having causes, but that we consider their causes as being *random* ones. It is, according to the popular notion, as though a cause had divorced itself from an orderly progression and ran amuck in space and time.

Let us use a homely analogy, which we have used before in connection with this same topic. A man chooses to cross a busy thoroughfare in the middle of the block, instead of an intersection. He is struck by a car which was driven at a proper speed. Would it be called an accident? No, because the principal cause was an intentional one. Such a situation has but one rational conclusion. The individual had intentionally brought about the condition by not crossing at the intersection. We can see how the causes were related to each other. Such a condition as finally occurred, we can easily

reason would always exist as a potentiality, namely, if the person crossed in the same manner.

Now, to use another analogy. A man walks along a sidewalk, on which he has a right to be. A piece of the cornice of the building high above him, falls, striking him on the head and killing him. The general opinion would be that such is an *accident*. Why? It would be contended that here was neither intent as a cause, nor that which was part of a natural progression of causes. Actually, however, contrary to common opinion, such was not an accident, but the result of a proper cause, a cause as consistent with natural and mystical laws as any other event which men would not call an accident. The efficient cause, the one that actually dislodged the stone that killed the man was very much a part of a concatenation of unperceived causes. The fact is this: when man is unable to anticipate or to perceive what to him is a chain of logical causes and events, the sudden and unexpected realization of one of such causes he designates an *accident*.

Nothing can escape that persistency of phenomenon in nature which we call law. Consequently, all things occur by a progression of causes and events. Nothing is actually spontaneous, except in the impression it may make upon us. Nothing is an arbitrary institution of distinct causes and effects, apart from the forces and laws of nature. Even man's will is no exception. Our will is a cause, but it is part of the Cosmic plan that we exercise will, so we cannot escape doing so. Man's comprehension of these laws and this order is so limited, so finite that all that which he cannot relate to his conception of it, he terms *accident*. The man who walked beneath the falling cornice was governed in his movement by the laws of propulsion. The speed with which he covered the distance along the sidewalk corresponded to those developments of change and motion which caused the cohesive power of the cement holding the cornice to lessen and finally for gravity to draw the loose part downward. All of these causes coincide with the laws of cause and effect. It is a complex unity or an order which man often does not conceive, and which he does not thoroughly understand, so consequently he has the *notion* that certain results are accidents—or chance.

It might seem chance or accident to a layman that a meteorite strikes a particular spot on the earth's surface, instead of some other. Yet, if a mathematician and a physicist were to know the exact weight of the original meteor and the particle itself which broke off from it, as well as its particular motion in space, the extent of its incandescence or gaseous nature when it reached the atmospheric belt of the earth, and many other factors involved, then indubitably they could calculate with almost exactitude just where it would land, and to them it would be no accident. Having such knowledge of the causes, accident or chance as notions, would not enter into its landing on a precise spot. It would be inevitable that the meteorite would land where it did. Not knowing such things, we are often inclined to substitute the term *accident* for the series of actual but not realized causes.—X

The Nature of God

A soror of the Midwest now arises to address our FORUM. She says: "Recently among a group of advanced Rosicrucians of this city, the subject of the nature of God arose. There were various presentations of the idea. Some were conflicting, as, for example:

God is perfect and knows no evil.
God knows both good and evil.
God is both good and evil.

"Of course, I have my own ideas about God. But I am learning to know how erroneous a great many of these are; so, most graciously, I would welcome further Rosicrucian statements on this most important of all questions."

Another soror, from war-torn England, also arises to express opinions, and ask questions of this FORUM, on the same topic: "Is God creating himself through mankind? The law of all being is cellular. Man is a polarized cell in the greater polarized cell of the universe. Mankind is evolving as millions of small cells governed by the same laws as the cell of the universe. Is this God the vast cell? Then, as I see it, now we each have a certain definite character, an ideal to attain. This pattern fits perfectly into its own place. God depends upon each of us harmonizing and fitting into the design."

In almost all of the liturgies and rituals of the Rosicrucian teachings, the deity is referred to as the "God of our Hearts." Admittedly, such does not attempt a definition of the Supreme Being. In fact, without making an extensive research through the degrees of the teachings of our Order, I can, with assurance, say that there is no precise framing into words the idea of God. The premise upon which the teachings are founded in this matter is to delineate as thoroughly as possible the manifestations of God, so that He may be *experienced* by the individual. This is to permit the individual, in accordance with the personal development of his inner consciousness and awakening of self, to define God in a manner that is comprehensible to him. Thus, the God of your Heart is the God that you understand. We would venture to say that in every little assembly of a dozen Rosicrucians, ten of them would agree on the Rosicrucian explanations of Divine phenomena as taught by AMORC. In all probability, however, not more than two in a group of that size could or would be in accord as to what constitutes the nature of God.

To any individual, God is the synthesis of certain of his experiences. Each individual is immured in a wealth of personal feelings, inner responses, observations, and intellectual developments out of which the idea of God springs. Even where persons appear by their religious affiliation, their church attendance, to have accepted the same conception of God, in the final and more specific analysis their concepts disagree. After all, to the average individual, God is not alone a substance or a mind-cause, but, as well, God is inchoate in the incidents of life itself. In other words, men sum up moral values and the objectives of life as they see them, and to them these are of the nature of God. In fact, it is these latter which cause the greatest divergencies in the opinion of the nature of God.

We will endeavor to summarize a few of the prominent conceptions of God. We will also indicate why some are not compatible with a truly mystical conception of a Supreme Being. Next and finally, we shall attempt a very brief mystical definition. The latter, for the reasons already given, will, of course, not be entirely acceptable to all advanced Rosicrucians or students of mysti-

cism, but should include several elements which are:

THEISM: Principally, this is the belief in a *personal God*. It is a belief that God is an actual being and as such is the cause of all of the reality of the universe, which, of course, includes man himself. Theism more than admits the existence of God, it makes Him a tangible being—a reality having form and *personal consciousness*. Theism, in its broadest sense, includes *polytheism* and *henotheism*. The former is the conception that there are several gods, each having certain powers of creation and who possess personal consciousness as does man. Henotheism is the ascribing of a supreme power to several gods in succession; simply put, that there is a kind of hierarchy of gods, the powers of each increasing in accordance with his rank. In polytheism the forms which the gods take are multitudinous—that is, they may be like almost anything—and, therefore, polytheism approaches and often is allied with idolatry. In fact, polytheism is an earlier and more primitive conception of theism.

In the highest sense, theism is the belief in a single God, but still a *personal God*. He is a God that thinks, plans, and has many or nearly all, according to the literal view of the Scriptures, the emotions and sentiments of man himself. This aspect of theism, the belief in a single God, is known as monotheism. Theism further expounds that this personal God or being *transcends* the world. His nature, his actual reality, are remote from material substance. He is said to dwell in a place or in a state or condition which is apart from any other substance or thing within the universe. On the other hand, it is said that His spirit and His knowledge are immanent in the world. To understand this better, theism, which we may say includes the average orthodox Christian religion, is the belief that God as a personal being does not dwell in the world or in any world, in fact. However, it is held that God asserts himself in such a manner that His spirit, His Divine personality and knowledge direct all reality, all men and things of the universe. Theism consequently affirms that God *reveals* himself as theophanic experiences to man, that is, He manifests to man's consciousness.

Theism most frequently includes the anthropomorphic conception of God. This

means that God is conceived as an exalted, omnipotent, and omniscient being in human form. To the theist, God is a man. He sees, hears, speaks, and talks as humans do, but in a manner far exceeding their powers. As this narrow view of theism gives form to God, it likewise assigns Him a position in space. God is above, He is in the heavens in a specific place. The orthodox theist in America, who points upward to the abode of God, is probably not aware that the theist of Australia, for example, who is also pointing upward, is actually, because of his relative position on the face of the earth, pointing in a different direction to God.

The theist is one for whom abstraction is perhaps quite difficult. It is not possible for him to express devotion for a Divine cause and effect. Reality to him is *substance*; it is something that must fall within the categories of dimension and form, or else it is a vagary. God being a real, an intimate experience to him, he consequently clothes that experience in those ideas of form and substance, which his mind can embrace. The idea of God as consciousness, or as a mind is too intangible for him and he abhors it. The qualities of goodness, which the theist attributes to God, seem to him to flow from the same causes as he experiences goodness coming from his fellow humans. God has compassion; He loves humanity as a father loves his children. God despises evil, as men do; therefore, He smites His enemies, using His means to do so, just as men within their limited capacity do likewise. Whatever man conceives as evidences of God, he seeks within his own capacity, within his own mortal being, for examples of these functions of God. Simply put, to the theist, man is the offspring of God, not just spiritually but physically as well. The Biblical statements that we are children of God are taken literally by the theist. They cause him to draw a parallel between God's functions and his own.

DEISM: This conception contrasts strikingly with theism. Deism is the recognition of a Supreme Being, a Being that is the teleological or *mind-cause* of the universe. The deist contends that God does not continuously exercise His will and intercede in the affairs of man. The deist conceives that God was an initial cause. He created all things as they now are, and has permitted them to

exist and function according to the preconceived plan. To the deist, therefore, God is a rational explanation of the cause of all existence. The deist contends that God cannot be personally experienced through manifestations in the consciousness of man. The deist takes the position that we know God by viewing His works, which are evidences of the wisdom of God, but that the deity does not reveal knowledge to humans individually. Deism is a form of gnosticism and is generally not within the scope of orthodox Christian theology. However, by no means, it must be obvious, can the deist be considered an atheist.

PANTHEISM: This is a distinctive departure from both theism and deism. The pantheist also conceives God as a first cause. This much is not unlike theism and deism. His God, however, does not transcend the world, but is entirely immanent in it. The pantheist's God is absolutely *formless*. He is without particular form because He is all things. He permeates the entire universe and pulsates through all things in it. Therefore, no single form could be conceived by man to represent God. In fact, the true pantheist is not a dualist. In other words, he does not recognize God and matter, or God and reality. To him there is only one true reality, and that is God, the moving, intelligent, active cause of everything existing everywhere. What man experiences as reality or the particulars of the world, according to the pantheist, are but the variations of this incessantly active mind, or God, which is ubiquitous.

To the pantheist, God, for example, is in a tree, He is in a star, in a leaf, as well as in a new-born babe. All of these things, he says, are in accordance with the nature of God, which is their very *essence*. There is more of God, more of His infinite essence in some expressions of His being than in others. Man is one of such complex expressions. Development, or what we term *evolution*, is an accretion of the ways in which God manifests as a single thing. For analogy, a bouquet of flowers has more of the fullness and completeness of those attributes of fragrance and beauty of color than has the single flower. So, too, man has more of God within him than a tree or star has, because of the numerous attributes of which man consists. However, no one thing, or any

group of things could be all of God, even though it would be more of Him, because God is infinite and there are no limits to what He can be or is.

True mysticism includes many of the aspects of pantheism. The mystic does not isolate God. He does not remove Him from the world of material things. To the mystic, all law as expressed in any phenomena, matter, energy, and in the spiritual consciousness of man is the mind of God. Man is the greatest expression of this all-pervading mind of God, because it is in man's form alone that God is aware of Himself. When man is conscious of his own Divine self, God then is conscious of His own nature. God's self-consciousness is expanded, is increased to the extent that mankind realizes its own Divine nature. God, therefore, is ever creating His own self-consciousness, as the soror has said.

The philosophy of Leibnitz offers some excellent examples of mystical pantheism. Leibnitz's doctrine of *preconceived harmony*, a definite plan for the universe, into which all things fit and which constitute the nature of God, to a great extent, parallels the views of the soror given above. The *monad*, according to Leibnitz, is the smallest particle of reality. These monads are imbued with a consciousness. Each is aware, if you will, of a specific objective, a duty to perform, which has been instilled in him. The monads are arranged according to a graduating scale of importance, or, shall we say, complexity. The lowest of them comprise matter, while the highest are those which comprise self-consciousness, the ones that are aware of their own nature. These monads cluster together in accordance with the preconceived plan of God. Soul monads cluster to those which comprise the body; those of the body cluster to the soul. Neither is trying to help the other. Each has its own duties to perform, but like parts in a great machine, they all fit in together, in accordance with the plan of the inventor or designer. According to Leibnitz, God does not have to intercede. He does not have to adjust things because each thing is imbued with his consciousness at the outset. Each has its purpose, and all function together harmoniously. They began together to serve a purpose, and they cannot escape that purpose.

As to whether God created *good* and *evil*, that is purely a theological and polemic dis-

cussion, and it ends nowhere, because neither good nor evil are positive. They are notions of mind. No two people, for example, would agree on what constitutes good. We might take this point of view: there is only one positive reality, and that is God, and the substance of God. If there would be something apart from God, then evil could exist, but there cannot be anything apart from that which is, and certainly God cannot be any less than what He is, so His positive nature continues. On the other hand, there are aspects of existence, so far as we humans are concerned, which seem to particularly satisfy our composite natures, and we prefer to call those complimentary conditions good. Conversely, all opposite, we say, is evil.

It might be asked by someone: are not rape and murder, which are very positive acts, evil? Would you say they are good just because they exist in the world and because all that exists must be of the nature of God? Our answer is, what occurs, in itself is not an evil—namely, the violation of virginity or compelling another to die. Death, for example, is inevitable and the same society which abhors murder, sanctions war. The nearest approach to evil is when we have certain moral standards—that is, when we believe that certain things represent the intent of God, and we believe this from our feelings within, from the dictates of self—and when, notwithstanding, we defy these moral precepts. If I believe a thing to be good, and then wilfully try to extirpate it, I am approaching evil, for I am seeking to defy what I believe to be of Divine origin. But things, in themselves, cannot be evil, only the motive which man has in bringing them about is evil. A barbaric people, for example, who in their crudeness are murderous and lecherous, and yet who are not conscious to themselves of any moral transgressions, are not evil. It is quite true, and we have much evidence of this in the world today, they may be *destructive* to human society. In such events they must be disciplined for the preservation of society, whether it is a small group or a nation, but they are not evil if they are in that stage of development where they are not wilfully defying what to them constitutes the Divine good. Evil is relative to the human conception. If good is the *best*, then everything is of the best except where man tries to depart from

that which he believes to be the good, or where he changes his conception of what is the best.—X

The Meaning of Truth

Probably every human being is, to a certain extent, searching for truth. Truth and ultimate reality are two of the primary problems of metaphysics in the desire to arrive at an understanding of what, after all, is final in the scheme of things. It is difficult to answer questions, however, such as one frater writes when he directly asks, "Just what is truth?" It would not be wise to take the space in this *Rosicrucian Forum* to discuss all that there is of truth, even though it is a fascinating subject.

The inquirer is referred to various textbooks on philosophy in which can be studied and analyzed the ideas of truth that have been developed by philosophers and thinkers throughout the history of human thought. However, one thing is true, I believe, and that is that according to all explanations of truth, in the final analysis, truth is relative. We mean by this that what may be true for you may not always be identically true for everyone else. Truth must be measured in terms of the consciousness of the individual who does the judging. In other words, we must learn that insofar as our understanding is limited, so must our concept of any final ideas and purposes in the universe also be limited. Only God can know absolute truth because only He can include in His consciousness all things that are, and thereby be able to group into proper relationship isolated things, and give them meaning and purpose.

Much of the efforts of philosophy, psychology, and religion have been developed toward an attainment of truth, or at least a degree of truth. Many of these theories, however, do not fit into the everyday life of an individual. Most of us can adjust our thinking better to an idea of evolving truth, but such a concept requires the ability to change our own opinions and convictions where needed. It requires us to be open-minded; that is, to keep our decisions subject to changes and revisions. This prevents pure stubbornness and the refusal to see new conditions and relationships forming.

Man cannot arrive at any reasonable concept of truth if he bases that concept purely upon the physical world and his objective senses. Truth is not confined to any physical entity, whether it be man's body or any other form of creation. Truth is God, as we have already said, and if we are to make a concept of it, or of ultimate reality, we must know, insofar as it is possible, the meaning of life and the knowledge which the soul can carry through various incarnations to its present point of advancement. All religions and philosophies must reflect a certain amount of truth as the result of a serious and careful consideration of life and its environment, but we, as human beings, are blinded to the entire truth even though we may not be in error in our judgments and concepts. By this is meant that even if we could always know that our judgment and conclusions would be correct, we could still be far from the truth, merely because of the materials upon which we based our convictions.

This fact can be illustrated. Let us imagine that there exists a huge window made up of sections of glass, each section being of a different color. Imagine also that intelligent beings live in such a relationship to this window that their environment is limited to the light which passes through one colored section of this glass. In other words, an intelligent being lives in the area of the light which passes through the red glass, for example, and has no concept of existence outside of that area upon which the red light falls. This individual, then, would be objectively aware only of the light that came through that portion of the window and his environment would be made up only of that particular light. In such a hypothetical case, there would be the individual who lived always in a red light, another in a blue light, and so forth, for every color that was in the window. Each would interpret his world on the basis of the light in which he perceived it, and each would believe in an objective sense that that particular colored light in which he lived and which revealed his surroundings was the one and true reality. To a certain extent, each would be stating a truth and yet none of them would know of the pure white light that contained all colors in itself.

We see here an illustration of how truth is relative to intelligence and environment

in this particular imaginary case. Each of these individuals would believe that all reality was in terms of what he perceived; and if it were possible for these individuals to discuss with each other their environment in terms of light, none of them would be capable of conveying to the other the particular idea of the colored light in which he lived. Even if this were possible, probably the most dominant one would try to convince the others that the light in which he lived was the real one. In other words, in a group of intelligent beings one would try to become a leader to make the others think that the particular light that he experienced was in some way more important than the light which another experienced. The real truth could probably not be arrived at. In other words, the idea that a pure white light entered the window and was the supreme reality or actual truth in regard to light would be beyond their comprehension because no white light as such passed through the window.

How then, we ask, might these individuals ever arrive at final truth and understanding of ultimate reality? It is obvious from this explanation that it could not be through the process of objective perception or reasoning. The only way that a concept of white light could be obtained by these individuals would be through some kind of mystical experience or transcendent conception which would bring into their consciousness through channels other than those of the objective sense faculties, the fact that true reality was not the phase of light which they perceived, but a white light entirely different and unknown in their physical and objective experience.

So it is with man in his attempt to arrive at truth or ultimate reality of his life and being. There is not a human being alive who can ever conceive of final truth or actual reality with his objective senses. Those who have had such glimpses of these final concepts have done so through a process of mystical experience which has opened the way to knowledge and understanding, that lies far beyond the range and limitations of objective sense faculties. We can carry this illustration to the philosophies, the religions, and beliefs of man. Each particular group or organization is interpreting reality and truth in terms of an experience and a conviction. Each one of us, basing our interpre-

tation of reality and truth on our experience and convictions, is seeing truth only in part. Only those who are developed through mystical experience have reached a stage of development where they begin to conceive of the meaning that is back of all the perplexing interpretations of truth that seem to confront us daily. The real truth, the ultimate reality of formal metaphysics, is comparable to the white light which is a source of all colors.

With this illustration and comments I have attempted to express my belief that there are fundamentally no differences or inconsistencies between sincere faiths and philosophies as there are divergencies. If we choose to bind ourselves so exclusively to any system of belief that we purposely shut out any other interpretation of the truth, then we are limiting our own ability to reconcile our experience with ultimate truth. We must be willing, as I have already said, to modify our concepts of truth. The only true religion can come through a mystical conception in which we are willing to raise ourselves above the level of any system or creed, regardless of how satisfying it may be to our objective senses and reason, and then gain a glimpse into the final and ultimate truth in reality that lies behind all manifestations.

—A

Misuse of Psychic Ability

Another member arises to direct questions to this FORUM. The questions are: "Can the average person develop psychic ability? Why are people, such as mediums who dabble in psychic phenomena, so undeveloped in other respects? If psychic ability is an especially developed power, why are these people rather on the coarse side? I don't wish to criticize them, I am only seeking information. Is psychic ability a spiritual quality, or is it rather like a talent?"

The soror has posited a number of worthy questions. The commonest form of psychic function is a kind of *hyperesthesia*. This means a supersensitivity that goes beyond the ordinary powers of objective perception. The individual has visual and auditory perception, for example, which is not experienced commonly by others. He is frequently termed clairvoyant or clairaudient. In the

strictest sense, all phenomena perceived or realized by a person, and which are not ordinarily discerned by the use of the five objective senses, are attributed to *psychic powers*.

The Divine Consciousness or the Mind of God, which is manifest in every cell of our being, which is explained in our Rosicrucian teachings, and with which our subjective mind is more closely attuned, is termed the psychic intelligence. This is done to differentiate between mind, the intelligence of soul, to which the psychic intelligence is related and, on the other hand, the objective and physical faculties of man. This Divine Mind or spiritual power within us, has its *organs*, its instruments, if you will, by which the objective man is put more easily into attunement with it. These organs are quite physical. They are composed of tissue, blood, and nerves, as are, for example, the heart, lungs, eyes, and so forth. The distinction being that these organs of the spiritual mind and consciousness are intended primarily as *transformers*. They reduce the higher vibratory rate and frequency of the Cosmic force that flows in and around us, to lower range frequencies or octaves which can be perceived by our brain consciousness. Such organs of the higher intelligence within us are the sympathetic nervous system and the psychic centers which are specific glands. How these function and how they may be used is explained in detail by the science and philosophy of the Rosicrucian teachings.

A person may have a highly evolved soul-personality or self, or he may not. In both instances, however, the individual could be equally as psychic; the reason being, that both may have their psychic centers equally physically developed, so that they are equally sensitive to the self within and to the Cosmic forces permeating the universe. The person having the highly developed soul-personality has greater moral standards and a more profound comprehension of the experiences which he receives. His use of the powers he has access to is for purposes which are broader and more humanitarian than those of the other. He uses his supersensitivity for enlightenment, and to take some particular problem to the Cosmic for solution. He seeks inspiration and the ability to accomplish that which will advance not alone himself but mankind generally. The other individual,

who has not such a highly developed soul-personality, but who is equally as psychic, so far as his psychic organs and centers are concerned—that is, so far as their development goes—uses his power for mediocre and limited purposes. As a rule, he uses it just to extend the range of his objective sense faculties—to see, to hear, and to feel to a greater extent than he can objectively. Principally, he uses his psychic faculties for telepathic phenomena, for attuning with the minds of others, to read their thoughts. This, under certain conditions where one's psychic organs are well developed, is a most simple accomplishment of hyperesthesia or psychic powers. Such a person does not know how to use his psychic powers to commune with the Divine Mind or to receive truly mystical *illumination*. Gradually, in time, he will evolve his understanding and then, if not in this incarnation, in the next, he will use his psychic powers for a more exalted and noble purpose.

Let me use an analogy. One has a magnificent radio. It is the latest development in radio reception and the science of electronics. It makes possible the reception of a large range of frequencies and is capable of the reception of even a small transmitter at a great distance. It is simply and efficiently controlled by the operator. The reception is clear and the loud speaker reproduces tones with remarkable accuracy. By means of this radio instrument, everything which is broadcast in the country is possible of reception. The turn of a dial or the push of a button brings immediately the choice of symphonic orchestras, lectures by noted educators, inspirational addresses by philosophers and scholars, fascinating descriptions of foreign lands and peoples, moving dramatic events, and as well, of course, much comedy and types of programs which border on vulgarity, and inane, moronic topics. A person who is desirous of good entertainment and who dislikes vulgarity and who appreciates that which appeals to the finer emotions and sentiments will select a program over this radio instrument in accordance with his personal tastes and responses. The one who likes loud, boisterous programs, light and frivolous types of entertainment, and prefers not to think or learn, will select the other type of program. Each, however—and this is the important point—has at his disposal the use of

this splendid instrument, which is capable of reaching out and transforming and reducing to the level of his consciousness, that which is beyond his ordinary objective perception. So, too, the evolved soul-personality in this incarnation, who is already quite psychic, uses his instruments of psychic sensitivity to further the betterment of self. If the one who is not so evolved, but whose psychic faculties or organs of psychic perception are equally developed is inclined to misuse them, not morally but ethically, he, shall we say, dissipates these powers like the man who uses the magnificent radio instrument for silly, useless programs.

The latter types are often the *professional psychics*, who prognosticate, that is, tell fortunes and give readings. They are most often not mystically inclined, and therefore not aware of the misuse of their psychic faculties. Why are they permitted to so use them? The answer is, so long as they do not violate Cosmic laws and injure others, they can use their psychic sight, hearing, and so on, in the manner as described. However, they do not, by means of their psychic faculties, ever receive the tremendous influx of knowledge known as Cosmic Consciousness. They are never developed by the Cosmic to the realization of a mission, nor is there given to them any outstanding point or principle for the betterment of humanity. Though their psychic organs and faculties, their transformers, if you wish, are quite developed, they do not know how to use them to reach the higher planes of the Cosmic. To use another analogy, a master mechanic can accomplish many times the results of the layman, even though both have the same tools at their disposal. These persons who so use their psychic faculties gradually learn, I repeat, and then ultimately they become great mystics and perhaps masters of Cosmic law. If they learn that what they are doing is wrong and persist in doing so, then they incur karma. Gradually, their psychic perception diminishes and they will find it far more difficult to recover than one who is trying to awaken it for the first time.

It might also be asked, why is not everyone, who sincerely seeks to attune with the Cosmic to use such experiences as he might receive unselfishly, given naturally more highly developed psychic faculties? Let us

not forget that the psychic organs are physical. As we have often said in our monographs, we would all have developed psychic senses if our customs and our habits during childhood were not such as to ignorantly cause us to suppress the development of these organs. We often misuse our powers through superstition or through fear, or let them atrophy from nonuse. The Rosicrucian teachings are designed to quicken and stimulate these organs, bring them to the norm of functioning intended by the Cosmic. Further, some persons, by the process of organic development, have especially developed psychic faculties, and even with abuse or lack of concern for their care, they still are far more developed than the average person. Such individuals are the so-called *natural psychics*.

For further analogy, we know that some people have remarkably strong and perfect teeth, even though they have not exercised any more care for them than others. This is due to biological and physiological causes. The exceptional, unintentional development of psychic faculties is, therefore, in all probability likewise due to physiological causes. Such persons have remarkable opportunities if their soul-personality is evolved enough in that incarnation to cause them to realize it. A person whose soul-personality is evolved and who also has developed psychic powers of perception never resorts to brummagem displays of his abilities. To him that would be a definite misuse and perversion of his God-given faculties. Consequently, you never see him taking part in theatrical performances or in carnivals, or with a sign outside his office or home, bearing the words: "Psychic Reader." He uses his powers for purposes which transcend such common exhibits.

This, I believe, explains why the average commercial or "professional" psychic is often uncouth and lacking in any knowledge of mystical principles. Often, for *business reasons*, they use the terminology of mysticism and occultism. A discussion with them, however, will soon reveal that they are but familiar with the vocabulary and have made no study of the terms and phrases they use, and have no corresponding ideas of their real meaning. They use them as a sort of academic window-dressing to impress their gullible clientele with their false profundity and erudition.—X

Do We Reason After Death?

One of our good fratres in Porto Rico asks the following interesting questions of our FORUM: "Does human consciousness reason while on the Cosmic Plane? What kind of consciousness do humans have on the Cosmic Plane? For example, if my transition happened at this time, and I found myself on the Cosmic Plane, would I meet my father's consciousness and would I be in position to relate to him the horrid happenings in our present world? And would his consciousness be also in a position to feel surprised and intensely interested in the information I could impart to him? Of course, such questions may seem absurd, but I express them in this manner to make clear the real point I wish to elucidate; and also to discover the degree of continuity there is between our present mortal consciousness and our future Cosmic Consciousness."

Let us begin by dividing existence after death, or after transition, into three states. The first of these is where the personality, the ego, or self, does not immediately pass into the realm of the Cosmic, but rather is *earth-bound*. In such an instance, the soul force, of course, is liberated from the body by transition, but the personality or self of the individual lingers on as an intact entity, in an intermediate stage between this plane and the Cosmic Plane. It is like a disembodied consciousness that is quite aware of the objective world and the details of its former physical existence.

We shall use an analogy to describe this rather complicated situation. Think of a beautiful wild flower growing on the grassy slope of a mountain. It is vibrant with the life essence, which, for the sake of explanation, we shall compare with the soul force. It conforms to all the manifestations of life, which it is possible for it to express. It is rugged, symmetrical, and beautiful in its hues and fragrant in its odor. Then the heavy boot of a mountaineer inadvertently crushes out its existence. The life force is released from the cells of the flower's structure. This energy of which life consists, of course, is not destroyed, but it is no longer confined to the physical form of the flower. However, part of the personality of the flower lingers on intact; that is, its fragrance re-

mains behind for some time before disappearing. This fragrance is *earth-bound*. So it is with the earth-bound personalities of humans. The memory of the subjective mind remains intact in those instances where the self was not able, for example, to complete some work or to fulfill some obligation Cosmically ordained for it. The self strives to influence objective conditions, to bring about certain results, to fulfill a plan.

To use still another analogy, it would be as if suddenly your physical body were to disintegrate completely. You would have no substance, you would have no tongue with which to speak, no physical hand with which to reach out and touch someone. However, your consciousness would be quite intact. You would be aware of yourself and fully cognizant of what you wanted to do. Through your subjective consciousness you would also be aware of the thoughts of others and material conditions on the physical plane generally. This would not be a pleasant situation and you would be anxious to have your consciousness released from its awareness of the physical world, because of your inability to function in it properly. You would strive to perform your duties as soon as possible. You could not, of course, injure anyone or detrimentally affect the lives of others. In fact, Cosmically, you would remain *earth-bound* just long enough to accomplish the mission the Cosmic intended. During such a brief earth-bound existence, you would be quite aware of friends, relatives, and familiar places and things.

The second kind of survival of consciousness after transition is an absorption into a plane of Cosmic Consciousness. This is the commonest form of existence of consciousness after transition. Again, of course, the soul essence would be liberated from the body and be part of the Universal Soul, without the necessity of flowing through any physical body. The personality or self would be merged into the great Cosmic Mind or Divine Consciousness. Let me make plain that the self would not be lost in the Divine Consciousness, like a drop of water falling into a lake. Rather, your self-consciousness would fit into an harmonious relationship with the whole of the Cosmic Mind, into an order that depended upon the development of your particular soul-personality. Let us think of

the great Cosmic Mind or Consciousness as consisting of octaves of a musical scale. Our individual personalities or realizations of self are but degrees of our expression of this Divine Consciousness manifesting in us as soul. After transition, therefore, in the lower octaves of this Divine Consciousness, reside those personalities which are crude or less evolved. And upward, according to a graduated scale, and in the higher octaves would be included those personalities which were more evolved, more closely attuned during life with the soul force of their beings.

Now, this is a difficult subject, so we will approach it from still another point of view. I shall use still another analogy, one I have used at other times. After transition, each personality, each self would, like a wave band of the color spectrum, fall into its proper relationship. In the Cosmic, all of these personalities or selves would comprise one great whole, yet none would ever lose its distinctiveness. The yellow band, for example, in white sunlight is never visible, but let that white light pass through a prism, which we will say represents the physical body, and it is refracted again. It expresses its individual personality or yellow color.

While the personality is thus a part of the whole Cosmic order, it is aware of itself, but it cannot express itself separately. It is as though the red and green colors in white sunlight were conscious of their personalities but could not express them separately until given another body or prism by which they could be refracted separately. While in this Cosmic Consciousness, you will be so occupied with the obligations related to the influences of that state and with what the personality must experience there before reincarnating again that you will not be concerned with the matters and particulars of mortal existence. This consciousness will have awareness of other personalities. You will feel close to all, for you will have a consciousness of human brotherhood that will go beyond the blood relationship of parents, brothers, sisters, and so on, of your last incarnation. Remember, your soul-personality may have existed many times before on the earth plane. Since there is no factor of time in the Cosmic, you are close to all of those whom you loved and who loved you, regardless of the centuries past in which you

knew them. In the Cosmic, you would not be discussing temporal affairs. The experiences there, insofar as importance was concerned, would far transcend the interests of worldly existence. You would not have a form or facial or bodily appearance, or a separateness as delineated in the old theological conception of heaven.

The third state of this survival of consciousness includes only the most highly advanced soul-personalities, those especially ordained as Cosmic masters. Such soul-personalities will never again incarnate in physical bodies. They are given duties to perform, to assist in the guidance of mortals on earth who are striving for illumination. They are to help those who have noble aspirations. They do not govern the lives of mortals on earth. They do not stand at man's elbow to serve him as a genii. They do inspire men to resort to certain ways of living and help them to find means of experiencing the self within and to attain to Cosmic Consciousness. However, the mortal must first have made great progress through his own efforts, studies, experiences, and meditations before he can expect such Cosmic assistance. And when such assistance is given, we repeat, it is only to help the mortal to help himself, never to accomplish for him what he should do himself.

Such Cosmic Masters have an awareness of self. They know that they are, but they are without personality as we know it or understand it. Of course, it is most difficult to describe, because we have no true comparison in our existence. It would be something like the equivalent of knowing that you are, without any of the configurations usually attributed to self. In other words, you would not be able to identify self by name, by familiar habits, by certain sensations, and so forth. However, like in the state we first described above, the Cosmic Master is also quite aware of the mortal existence of those humans he strives to enlighten.

It may be a very pleasing thought to believe that we continue to function mentally in consciousness of self quite as we do on this earth plane after transition, but such is not so and it is not consistent with Cosmic principles. The only partial acceptance is in the instance of *earth-bound personalities*.—X

Rosicrucian Teachings and Personalities

We are always gratified to receive letters from members who indicate that from the teachings of the organization they have found experiences in their lives which have proven the value of these teachings. The final criterion for the judgment of any set of instructions or philosophy depends upon how well we can make those teachings effective in our own lives. Just because an idea, or a system of ideas, helps someone else means nothing to us unless we can make it help us too. While this may seem selfish to a certain extent, it nevertheless is the final means by which we judge anything we do.

Frequently a member will express a repeated desire to contact individuals who will direct him in these teachings or in other philosophy and understanding. Such individuals sometimes have a mistaken opinion that another personality can do for them what they cannot do for themselves. It is far better that we realize that those who gain the most from any type of instruction are those who make the teachings and the principles, rather than the personalities, the fundamental purpose of their efforts. Only those who have found a firm basis in their philosophy of life have something upon which to stand in times of stress or need. If you could read, as I do, the communications from members throughout the world, many of whom have made sacrifices far beyond what most of us in this country can conceive, you would be more convinced of the value of the principles of this Order's teachings. I know of cases where they have served as the foundation upon which individuals have been able to rebuild their lives. For example, there are several members in England who lost everything during the series of air raids of a few years ago—their homes, their personal property, and sometimes members of their families. Under circumstances such as these the value of one's philosophy of life is brought to a real test, and those who have gained a foundation in their understanding and knowledge, upon which they can bravely face the future, have gone through a test that will sustain them even more definitely in the future.

As human beings, even the most retiring of us are gregarious; that is, at one time or

another we all seek the association of other human beings. Hero worship is so strong in most of us that we frequently go out of our own way to seek a personality to look up to. Such is a natural state of man, but it is, at the same time, a problem, because to place our faith and hope and ideals in a personality, regardless of our good intention or the good intention on the part of that personality, is to limit ourselves to the mind of another. When we look about us in all phases of social activities, we see many examples of personality leadership. In many cases where the personality has been of the right caliber, the activities have been successful. In other cases the movements or activities have failed because they could not rise above the limitations of one personality.

Far greater than any personality are the ideals held in the minds of most men. All who strive to live in accordance with the highest virtues which man can conceive, will acknowledge, upon short consideration, that these ideals are greater than can usually be expressed in the individuality of any one person. Yet, there is a tendency on the part of humanity to try to project personal ideals into the individuality of other persons. When these persons in some respect fail to live up to the high ideals which they have been made to represent, we are inclined to become disappointed or even despondent because we see manifested the very traits that are typically human. In the case of a child, or a human being in a lower status of development than that which we believe we ourselves have reached, it is only natural that following a personality should be an ideal state of society. Personality leadership is naturally sought in such states of existence because the individuals in such stages of development do not have the breadth of vision to create their own idealism. However, one of the obligations of advancement upon the part of man as a race is his ability to think abstractly, his ability to realize that the ideals which he seeks and the aspirations which are his, are far above the range of any human personality. We have ever before us the more difficult work of establishing our aims and aspirations in a world of ideals. We must seek the raising of our own potentialities to the level of those ideals and we must direct our efforts, not toward a personality but toward the ideals themselves.

I cannot emphasize too strongly the fact that this is the most difficult of the two paths.

As already indicated, we have had the experience from time to time of members expressing in their correspondence a desire to contact other members to whom they can look upon as leaders for further instruction. It is established in our Lodges and Chapters that certain members should assume certain responsibilities of leadership just as the officers of the Supreme Lodge and the Grand Lodge must also assume such leadership, but it is not the intention of this organization that these individuals, regardless of their office in our physical organization, should become the ideal which the member seeks, but rather that the ideals must supersede all personalities.

When we think of the actual and traditional history of this organization going back not only into months and years, but into centuries, we gain a glimpse of the temporary status of any one personality. This is in no way an attempt to belittle the great personalities that have made this organization what it is. Without the philosophy of such leaders as Sir Francis Bacon, de Saint-Martin, Robert Fludd, Michael Maier, Dr. Lewis, and many others, the organization could not be what it is today. The important fact to remember is that these very individuals worked with one purpose in mind—to establish an organization representing ideals which they pledged their whole lives to perpetuate, and it is the ideal more than the personality that has continued outstanding from one generation to another and which maintains the organization at the present time.

We as members of this organization today, must realize that our responsibility is also to assist in the maintenance and perpetuation of the ideals which form the basic philosophy of Rosicrucianism. These ideals may be unattainable in a state of perfection in many of us in our present lives, but they can be a constant challenge, an aim toward which we can direct our efforts. I again point out the fact that to direct our aims and aspirations toward impersonal ideals is more difficult than to follow a personal leader. Those who are being tested and found not worthy of assuming this obligation will be led off from time to time by some strong personality whom they contact and whom they will seem

to see as a materialization of their ideals in a personal form; it can be no other way. Some personalities who have the ability to direct and control others take advantage of that ability by presuming that they are the personalization of the ideals of the followers they seek. Only disappointment can result for those who give their whole support to any human personality, and only sincere desire and constructive effort can guide those who see beyond the person to the ideals toward which we can all direct ourselves.

How well it has been brought home to those who have suffered, whether in these recent years or at any time in the past, that no individual, no other human being can fill the vacancy in their lives that suffering and trial have created. Such an emptiness can be filled only from within, by the convictions and aspirations which we ourselves build and which become a part of our environment as we walk up the path toward achievement. In the popular sense we call such a foundation a philosophy of life. It is well that we of like minds should unite together so that we might all be benefited and inspired by the successes and problems of others. This will give us an opportunity to constructively use the social instincts which are in us and at the same time help us all to see that we are walking on a great path and upon which we must face the individual impediments.

It is the sincere hope of those who provide you with these teachings and act as officers of this organization that each step of your progress will give you added inspiration and encouragement to hold steadfastly to your ideas and, at the same time, to willingly assume the obligations which you find necessary to maintain, and perpetuate the source of these ideals. It is worthwhile that we each should re-dedicate ourselves to the purposes which we have found of value and to the ideals of this organization so that this organization will, insofar as it is physically possible, continue to be a representative group of men and women who are steadfastly directing the courses of their lives toward a greater life and purpose that lie ahead. Such purpose will carry us further than can the inspiration of any one personality. As we gain and grow we must realize that there are others on this path whose disappointments and discouragements

may be far more of a problem to them than our setbacks are to us. It then becomes our responsibility to help these others. We cannot dictate the affairs of our fellow men, but we can assume the obligation of attempting to point out the dangers and pitfalls that may be avoided.—A

Planes of Consciousness

In the study of consciousness and the attributes of consciousness, a question arises on the part of members in the higher degrees that is quite well expressed by a frater who asks, "Are there definite planes of consciousness that can be separated specifically from each other?"

It is very difficult to imagine consciousness being broken down into different parts or divisions. We well know from experience that different phases of consciousness come to our attention repeatedly. That is, we do not dwell regularly only upon one phase of conscious thought. It is through the practice of concentration that we can draw our consciousness to one particular thing and attempt to bring to focus all the powers of mind and thought into one channel.

Consciousness is generally considered as a whole. It exists throughout our body, not only in our physical brains but in each cell. The content of consciousness at any one time, even when it is primarily directed toward one thing or one purpose, is still made up of its component parts which are the results of our own particular knowledge, experience, and desires. Because of some writings on the subject of consciousness, particularly when Cosmic consciousness is mentioned, the idea is created that there are certain planes that are distinct and separate from each other. While this is true to a certain extent, we must not lose sight of the fact that there is no definite line of demarcation between any so-called "planes of consciousness." The term "expanding consciousness" recently used as the title of an essay in the *Rosicrucian Digest* under the "Cathedral Contacts" section of that magazine explains this concept.

With this concept we realize that consciousness is an attribute of human life that can grow. When Dr. Bucke, in his book *Cosmic Consciousness*, speaks of simple con-

sciousness, self-consciousness, and Cosmic consciousness, I do not think he intended to convey that there are three separate, isolated conditions, but rather that these terms applied to the culmination of certain states of consciousness. Even superficial observation informs us that nature does not ordinarily work in extremes. There is no definite division, for example, between light and darkness in nature. We cannot state that any one particular point in twilight or dawn is the exact ending of darkness and the beginning of light. Also throughout nature we find evidence, such as the seasons gradually changing from one to the other, and the dates which we set as their actual beginning and ending are, to a certain extent, arbitrary, although based upon certain astronomical phenomena.

The same is true of consciousness. The simplest form of consciousness is found in life lower than that of man. In early man, however, or even today among races which we consider much lower in the scale of development than those who are ordinarily considered to be living in civilized and cultured civilizations, there is evidence of this gradual transition between what Dr. Bucke refers to as simple consciousness and the self-consciousness of the average man and woman today. Planes of consciousness, then, is merely the terminology which we apply to a more or less relative state of development. As we evolve consciously, we are able to acquire a new outlook on our environment and to judge differently the concepts that may exist in other planes of consciousness.

Always in the human mind have been questions as to the *whys and wherefores* of what apparently is divine wisdom. Few of us are able to satisfy in our own minds such questions as, "Why does God or a Divine Mind permit suffering and tragedy in the world?" We can gain some insight into this question when we realize that the plane or standard of consciousness for a Divine Being, if it exists in any sense in the same manner as does human consciousness, would be able to conceive of an entirely different set of relationships than we can comprehend. In other words, the gap between Divine Mind and Consciousness and our own consciousness is of such a degree that we cannot lift our own thinking to the same level of that

which exists in the Cosmic or in the Divine Mind.

A parallel illustration can be found by comparing certain phases of simple consciousness with our own. In animals we find evidences of simple consciousness. Just what is all inclusive in this term is not generally agreed upon. For example, some may argue that an intelligent dog or horse can use a certain degree of reason while others state that even the most intelligent of animals do not reason at all but have a high degree of ability to understand and adjust themselves to the more or less complicated demands of their environment. Anyone who has owned a pet, such as a dog, will understand how often human consciousness and its conclusions are forced upon the simple consciousness of such an animal. We tend to create the animal's environment and make its decisions in terms of our consciousness. When a dog, for example, is said to be well trained and behaved, it is sometimes not necessarily a development of what might be considered canine intelligence, but rather the degree of adaptability which we have taught that animal to develop in terms of our own desires for its behavior. When a dog does what we want it to, we say it is intelligent and well trained; whereas, is it not conceivable that an animal is more intelligent if it functions in terms of its own consciousness without being forced to do what man, in terms of his consciousness, has decided is best for it? The same idea can be carried further by considering that man may be somewhat at fault in forcing his consciousness upon a lower form of consciousness.

Probably one reason why man suffers hardships and faces problems is because the Divine Consciousness or Mind is far more tolerant than human consciousness and gives man more freedom to function within the realm or scope of his own possibilities or understanding. In other words, it is doubtful that the Divine Mind forces its high state of consciousness upon man as man forces his understanding and desires upon lower animals. On the other hand, there are times when we make decisions for lower animals, as in the case of a pet, that are definitely to their benefit. We limit the range of an animal by tying it up on a leash or confining it in an enclosure so that it will not become a nuisance to the neighbors or run in front

of an automobile or otherwise endanger its own life. Who has not owned a dog and seen the obvious look of disappointment on its face when it is forced to be restrained while it wants to do something else; or when it is necessary to shut it in an enclosure when its master is going away and it would obviously prefer to go also?

Here we are using what we believe to be a higher state of consciousness, because of the understanding which that consciousness includes, for the benefit of a lower form of consciousness which could not possibly see all the implications involved or understand them. So here again it is not inconceivable that God is far more considerate of the individual than we might ordinarily conclude, and that many of the things that become a part of our environment, many things that are forced upon us other than through our own choice are done so because in the long run they prove beneficial for our own development and even our own well-being. If we conceive, then, of consciousness as evolving or expanding, we will understand that while it is difficult to draw definite lines between planes of consciousness there are obviously definite degrees of advancement. The important factor for us is not the attainment of a definite plan or degree but rather our devotion, as best we understand it, to the constant growth and usefulness of this highly valuable attribute of our souls.—A

Do Animals Evolve Self?

The Master of a Rosicrucian Chapter asks permission to address our FORUM. He says: "A question was asked by one of our sorores at a Chapter meeting, which I would like to submit to the FORUM for discussion. Her question was: 'Do animals have the power of evolving themselves by visualizing a higher state in their subconsciousness?'"

The proof of any answer to the exact question asked by the soror would be dependent upon whether or not it can be proved psychologically that animals, other than man, *visualize*. Such a faculty, it is generally conceded, has been limited to man. I do not mean to imply that it is the intention of the Cosmic that man alone should visualize, but at this moment in Cosmic time, he is the only animal that does.

That animals do evolve and do develop a *self-consciousness* is a known fact. The more developed the self-consciousness, the more it approaches a nascent soul awareness. It is man's consciousness of self that constitutes his realization of his duality and an appreciation of his Divine nature. Self-consciousness does not alone consist of perception of your physical form, your arms, eyes, hair, and so forth. It likewise composes those subtle emotional feelings, responses, and sentiments which include moral impulses, the dictates of conscience, and those inner elements of personality apart from your somatic or physical being. Try and define expressions of soul to yourself. Do not try to explain what you think the substance of soul is or its origin and purpose. Simply set forth in your own mind those qualities or attributes of your own being which *you* distinctly feel and believe are evidence of your soul-personality. You will soon agree that it is quite difficult to separate from self-consciousness such impressions as you have; in fact, you will perhaps say that your evidences of soul-personality and self-consciousness are one and the same thing.

Animals do give definite evidences of elementary expressions of this self-consciousness. They show hurt to their sentiments. Dogs feel contrite when they have done a wrong and will often hide from master or mistress. Of course, it could be said that they are doing so merely as habit, that they once committed a similar wrong for which they were punished. This undoubtedly does explain some of such acts, but not all of them. I am of the opinion that they dislike, from reasons of sentiment more than the fear of punishment, the offending of a master or mistress. This constitutes an extension of their self-consciousness, to include that which they love apart from their own physical selves. A display of the so-called virtues are indications that a human is being motivated by self and an expression of his soul. If this is so, then some animals are developing their soul-personalities as well, for many exhibit the same virtues.

Perhaps all this is a circumlocutory manner of saying that all animals have soul. To say that, is to enter upon highly controversial ground. Personally, from my understanding of the nature of soul, I most certainly would say that animals are imbued

with the essence of soul—namely, that they have within them the same Divine Intelligence, the same universal soul that man possesses. There is, however, a difference in its expression. The soul-personality of animals is far less developed than man's. To express it in still another way, the animal's self-consciousness, his awareness of self, the expression of his soul is far less than that of humans.

Let us use an analogy of a 150-watt electric light bulb. Such a bulb may be placed in an obscure lighting fixture, in which it is unable to efficiently radiate all of the light of which it is capable. Then, again, the same bulb may be placed in a magnificently designed, large fixture where little of its illumination is lost. The quality of the source of the light is the same. It is only the reflecting capacity of the fixture which houses it that is different. If we as Rosicrucians believe that soul is not a separate segment of the universal, Cosmic Soul in each of us, but rather is a flow of it through mankind, and, further, if we say this Universal Soul is the Divine Mind, then obviously it is ubiquitous; it is in *all living things*. The more complex the living organism, the more evolved it becomes. Physically, the more evolved a being, the more possible for it to become evolved spiritually as well. An animal, not having the physical and mental developments of man, is unable to experience soul as man does. He has a simpler form of consciousness. The physical development of man alone, we readily admit, is not all that is required for the evolution of soul-personality, but it is definitely essential. I do not mean muscular development, I mean the type of organism which man is. Any being not having the mental functions, and, for example, the sympathetic nervous system which man has developed, would find it quite difficult to become as conscious of self or of soul expression, as humans do.

Animals, as intelligent dogs, definitely evolve their awareness of self. A dog that has his emotional self appealed to, where his sentiments are stimulated through kindness and affection, shows increasing sensitivity or response to what we know as self-consciousness. The dog begins to disclose in his mannerisms his awareness of the emotions of others, and to personally display that which we call the virtues. A dog which continually

associates with a human being, who tries to appeal to these aspects of the animal's nature, responds quickly. If the offspring of two dogs, raised under these ideal circumstances, could be placed in a like environment and then their offspring in turn reared under similar conditions, and this continued without variation for several generations, a high degree of self-consciousness would be developed in the animals.

It has been said that if when a dog finally comes to realize that he is a dog, when he is able to distinguish between his personality and that of humans, he will no longer be a dog, regardless of his physical form, but a much more highly evolved being. One of the characteristics of evolved self-consciousness is, of course, the ability to clearly distinguish self from all else, and to be able to compare self with the external world and with others of our kind. Fully developed self-consciousness, where the self has a well-defined reality to the individual, is as real as his foot or his arm, and is not merely a series of indefinite sensations.

The greatest asset in the development of self for the evolution of the soul-personality is *introversion*. Turn your consciousness inward and reflect upon self at least a few minutes each day. Experience and analyze the impressions of self. Visualize these impressions; have them take form in your consciousness. Become acquainted with *you*. Stop living just outside of yourself entirely.

—X

A Commentary On First Principles

To every conscientious student there comes a time when he or she realizes that there is truth in the familiar saying that "haste makes waste." There is a desire upon the part of everyone when something new is begun, to attempt to rush through it. This is particularly true of new students who enter our teachings because they desire or hope to gain some particular information or experience which does not seem immediately available. For this reason, some of the most important fundamentals of Rosicrucianism are sometimes overlooked.

In the preliminary monographs that begin the study of the Neophyte Degrees there are some of the most profound, metaphysical, mystical, and occult principles that the mind

of man can conceive. Unfortunately, they are not always obvious to the reader of these first lectures upon the occasion of the first reading. Many a student has learned, however, that to go back and review and reconsider these points, will open his eyes to the meaning contained therein.

Let us summarize here some of the outstanding points of these early teachings. We cannot do this in detail because a detailed analysis of all these principles would be a repetition of the monographs themselves. It is hoped that by commenting on the various points some of the fundamental laws and ideas can be brought out and presented in a manner which will awaken students to the need of understanding all phases of our teachings and which will make them realize that no one point in their progress is any more important than the other.

One of the first things which we learned in these early monographs was that time and space are concepts only of the objective consciousness. Up to this point most of us have been so familiar with the necessity of coping with the limitations of time and space that we were hardly aware of these two conditions as such, that is, as controlling every phase of existence. Almost all our lives and activities are devoted in some way to racing with time or overcoming the limitations that space forces on us. In these first principles, however, we are presented with the fact that time and space are only realizations of our objective mind; that they affect only the mortal and physical parts of our being, and that there is no time or space for the subjective inner consciousness or mind. It is through this principle that we catch our first glimpse into the realization that man has abilities and potentialities which he can develop that will not be regulated or directed by those physical limitations by which he has directed so much of his life and efforts up to that time. The realization that man can ultimately achieve an understanding of the use and abilities of his inner faculties and mind is the key to the use of mind power.

Another point in these early teachings is the realization that man as a living being on this earth is duo—he has a divine mind and a brain. This point may not seem so new to the student first studying these monographs, but in reality, it is a fundamental

rule for our philosophy. The soul, we learn, is not an attribute of our physical being, but the actual final connection between us and an understanding of an ultimate or supreme reality. It is the final solution, or at least the means or possibility of solution to all problems that may be a part of this or any past or future life. We then learn that because of this duality man is capable of developing an ability for the use of this force in him. The means by which we gain information and knowledge from this attribute of our being is through the process known as intuition. Intuition stands as a sixth sense in reference to our complete consciousness. We are already familiar with the fact that most of our knowledge comes to us through our five physical senses, and to most of us, any other channel of information or knowledge entering our consciousness is unheard of. Then, we learn there is a sixth channel—the channel of intuition, the sixth sense if we wish to call it that, which opens directly upon the wisdom of the universe, the soul of God, and provides us with an invaluable source of instruction and knowledge once we develop the technique for its use.

We must learn to use intuition. This is not unusual. Although we may have forgotten it, we all had to learn to use our physical senses which are the other channels to consciousness. A small baby cannot even focus its eyes, the sense faculty which we have learned to use most. So as in the physical body we must learn to use physical senses, there is nothing different or new in our having to learn to use this channel of intuition. Throughout all these first principles we are exposed to new concepts. We gain a logical understanding of many of them and find that it is the normal process by which man can come to know God, as it is not synonymous with mystery, and that those phases of true mysticism that may seem to some to be mysteries are only so interpreted because of lack of knowledge and understanding.

All through these first principles we are led to a new concept of initiation, will power, and man's general place in the universe. We could go on indefinitely stressing and amplifying the various principles involved, but that, after all, is something that no one person can do for another. You can read volumes of commentaries on every mono-

graph and principle of the Rosicrucian teachings, but we can give you only the teachings themselves and enough additional instructions such as these, to motivate your study and make your own use and application of these principles. No one can make you a Rosicrucian or an adept except yourself.—A

Do You Wish to be a Chapter Member?

A letter from a member asking, "How can I become a member of an AMORC Chapter?" brought to our attention the fact that there must be other members who have the same question in their minds. We could answer this question by referring members to the Constitution and Statutes. While every member should be generally familiar with the Constitution and Statutes of the Grand Lodge, we make every effort to try to augment these rules and regulations of the Grand Lodge by comments and further explanation.

A Chapter is a group of Rosicrucian members, that is, Sanctum Members who receive their monographs for study in their own homes, who voluntarily form a group for their mutual enlightenment and benefit as well as for the satisfaction that comes from the social contacts that can be made with others of like minds.

A Chapter, then, is a supplement, an additional feature to the regular home membership. When a Rosicrucian affiliates with a Chapter he does not in any way change his membership status from what it had been prior to his Chapter affiliation. In other words, the Chapter is an addition to membership and therefore increases the benefits of those who are affiliated with it.

To be successful a Chapter must depend upon the cooperation and interest of the members who so decide to work together. Here at Rosicrucian Park under the direction of the Imperator and with the assistance of other officers and members of the staff, the work of the Chapters, insofar as rituals, special instructions, interesting experiments, and instructive motion pictures are concerned, is prepared and distributed among the Chapters and Lodges of this jurisdiction. These supplementary and additional features which become interesting to the member are constantly being improved and having new features added to them. Therefore, the member who is affiliated with

the Chapter has the opportunity of participating in these interesting and instructive features of membership which, at least at the present time, are impossible to make available to the individual member due to the elaborateness of the equipment.

To return to the original question, "How can a member become affiliated with a Chapter?" the first step is to determine whether a Chapter already exists in the locality where you live or in a city near enough so that you could travel to its sessions. A directory of most of the Chapters and Lodges is found in the back of the "Rosicrucian Digest." If there is a city near you that is not listed and you wish to know definitely whether or not there is a Chapter, we will be glad to inform you. If there is a Chapter in the area where you live, you can contact the Master or Secretary and ask for an application to affiliate with the Chapter. Any active member may affiliate, and you may make such application to that local group.

If there is no Chapter in the immediate area where you live, it is possible that one could be established if enough members would work together. The Constitution of the Grand Lodge provides that when forty members petition the Supreme Grand Lodge for a Chapter, dispensation can be granted for them to establish a Chapter. We have a complete procedure by which the proper steps are taken to bring a Chapter into existence. If there are not forty members in your area then it naturally postpones the time when a Chapter can be established, but it gives an added incentive for you to assist in increasing the organization's membership in your area. You can even point out to prospective members that when the membership in your city or locality has grown sufficiently, a local Chapter and eventually a Lodge can be established.

We hope the time will come when every principal city and town in this jurisdiction will have a Chapter, a Chapter which will take its place among other constructive and worthwhile organizations in the community—a local organization of which every Rosicrucian can be proud. If you and all other members will work together in desiring to have the additional benefits of Chapter membership, then we will be successful in Chapter organization.—A

Send Your Questions!

We frequently receive letters from members of our large FORUM family, stating something like the following: "I enjoy *The Rosicrucian Forum* because it seems to anticipate so many of my questions. If I have questions in mind, I know that if I just wait long enough I will find them answered in *The Rosicrucian Forum*."

This, on the one hand, makes us very, very happy, because we like to know that we are rendering a service, that we are able to provide information which is useful, helpful, and personally gratifying to the members of our FORUM family. We hope to continue having the contents of the *Forum* be of that nature, and as soon as paper restrictions are lifted, to again increase the pages of the *Forum* in number.

However, when you wait with your questions, looking forward to having them eventually answered in *The Rosicrucian Forum*, do you realize that you really may be working a hardship upon us? Suppose each member of our FORUM family, each who participates in our circle of readers were to think likewise and each time he had a question would not write in, would not address the FORUM, but would keep it to himself, waiting to eventually have it answered—what would be the result? We would have very few, if any, questions and the interest value of the *Forum*, its service to you, would be much less. So we kindly request you to send your questions to *The Rosicrucian Forum*.

When, during the course of the day, you have a question arising in your mind which may have developed out of conversation with others, personal experiences, or something you have read and which is appropriate to be discussed in the *Forum*, jot it down and at the very earliest opportunity, that night or the next day, write us the question. Your letter can be brief. It does not have to be extensive. It can just relate the question, with the request that it be considered for an answer in the *Forum*.

You can further help us, if, before writing your question to the *Forum*, you take just a few minutes' time in your home and glance at the titles in the last two or three issues of the *Forum* which you have, to be certain that your question is not similar to or related to some other question answered in an issue

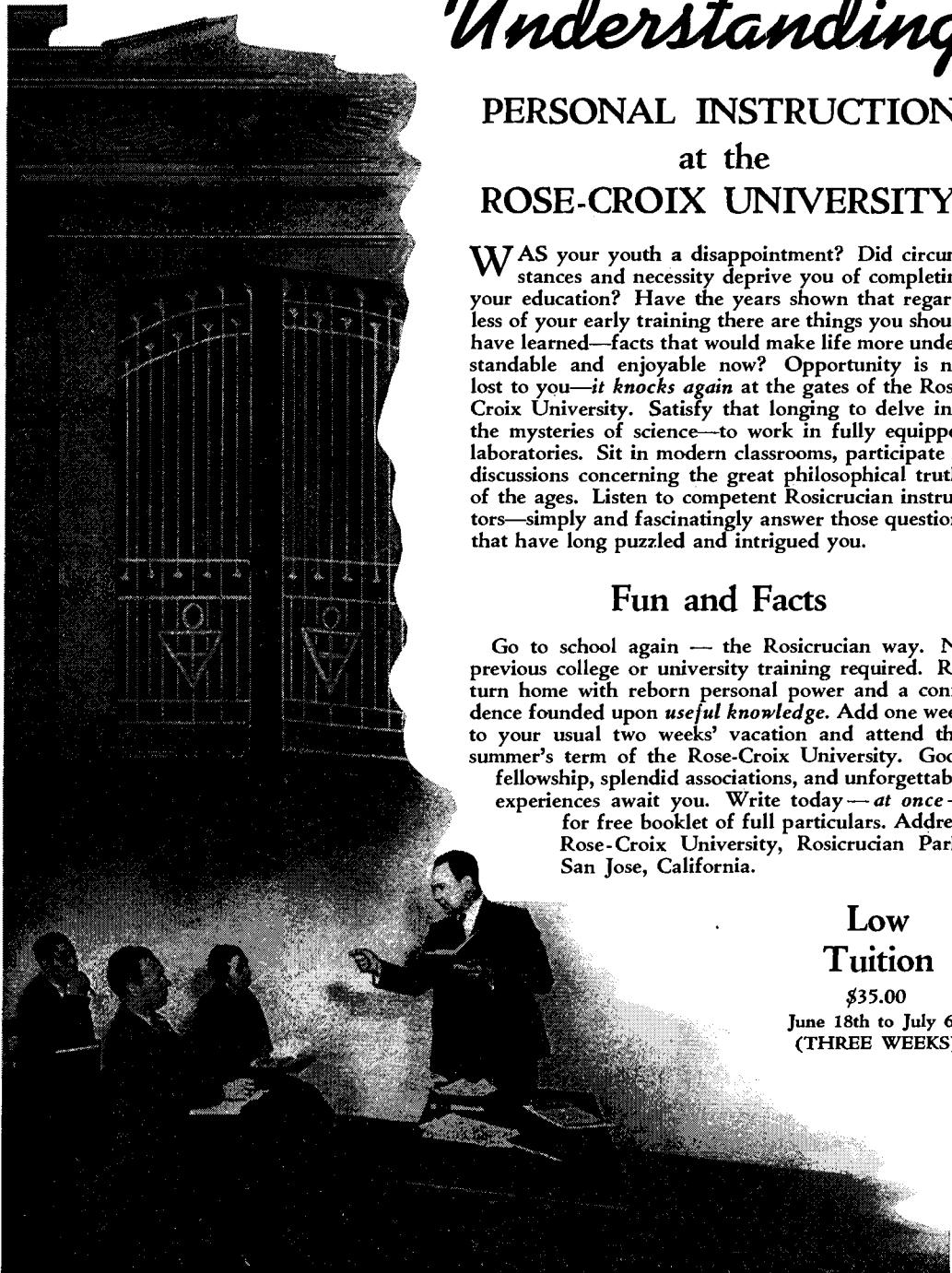
just a short time before. Some members, who have submitted questions to the *Forum*, have been disappointed because they were not answered in the forthcoming issue. The reason for this was that to answer their question, even though it was not identical with any recent one, would mean covering the same subject which had already been discussed in the *Forum*, perhaps just two or three issues back. If the member had referred to previous issues, he would not have submitted that question and he would not have been disappointed because it was not immediately answered. Furthermore, be sure that your questions are of a nature that concern *metaphysics, mysticism, philosophy, science, and Rosicrucianism*. They must be of general interest; that is, do not apply only to your own personal relationships, but will be of value to you and of help to others. Please make this contribution to *The Rosicrucian Forum*. If each of you do this, the *Forum* will be just that much more interesting.

Remember, if your question has not been recently answered, or one similar to it, it still may not appear in an immediate issue. It may require two or three issues before it will appear, because of the fact that answers are arranged some time in advance before the issue is published. But I want to impress upon you that the *Forum* is not a one-sided affair. A forum consists of questions and answers. Our obligation, our duty is to answer the best we possibly can, with the resources and facilities at our disposal. Your job is not only to receive those answers, but to help create them by submitting interesting questions.

Your question does not always have to concern just something that is pending; in other words, whether you should do this or whether you should do that. It may also concern something in the past. It may be about something that has occurred and you want to know the principle involved, the Cosmic law or circumstances which brought it about. You may want to know whether or not you should avoid such events or conditions in the future.

So we ask you to please let us have your FORUM questions. Think about them and *send them*. Address your letter to the Editor of *The Rosicrucian Forum*, Rosicrucian Park, San Jose, California.—X

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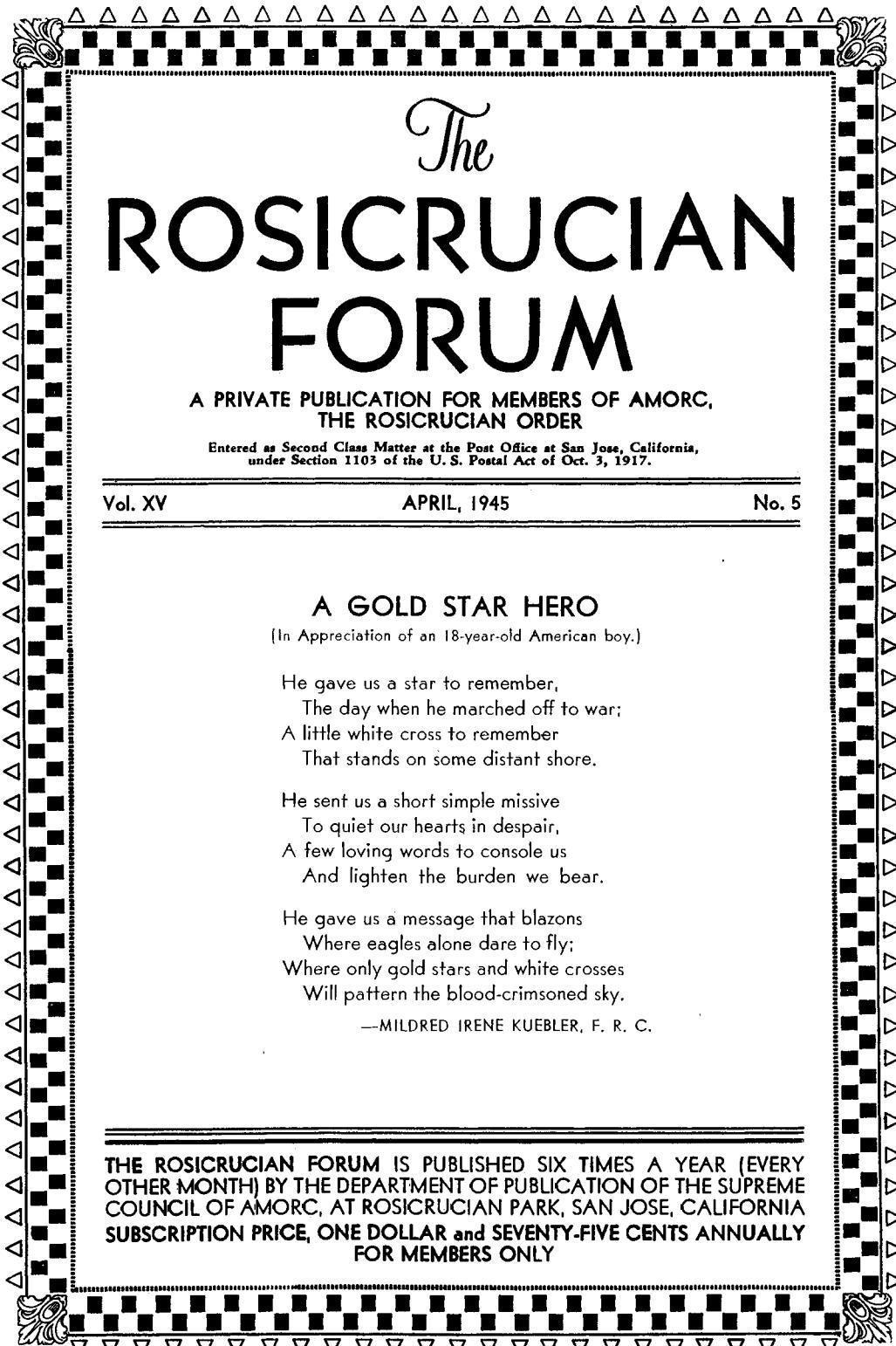
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A GOLD STAR HERO

(In Appreciation of an 18-year-old American boy.)

He gave us a star to remember,
The day when he marched off to war;
A little white cross to remember
That stands on some distant shore.

He sent us a short simple missive
To quiet our hearts in despair,
A few loving words to console us
And lighten the burden we bear.

He gave us a message that blazons
Where eagles alone dare to fly;
Where only gold stars and white crosses
Will pattern the blood-crimsoned sky.

—MILDRED IRENE KUEBLER, F. R. C.

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Greetings!



Dear Fratres and Sorores:

We live in this world. That ought to be sufficient reason to look upon it intelligently. This world, with which our lives are identified, is not just the earth. It is also the world of *human events*. In fact, these events, of which man is the cause, more often vitally affect us than do such phenomena of earth as earthquakes, floods, and cyclones. I do not think I will be disputed when I say that war, for example, has caused more human suffering and privation than any natural catastrophe in the memory of man.

The causes of war are many. If you could sum up all of the stupidities and vices of which man is capable, you might have a fairly accurate ledger of the causes of war. However, we can generalize that war is frequently caused by either a society's lack of morals and ethics, or an attempt to enforce unworkable ones upon others.

Everything is realistic. What appears to have permanency is only so in contrast with a more rapidly changing thing or condition. The entire *human experience*, as contrasted to many phenomena of nature, is recent. Therefore, there is much which to the mind of man has the illusion of stability. Some of these assumed stable things have and continue to serve men well. Others are changing and we are reluctant to admit the change. In fact, we often oppose it. For ages the average moral sense has inclined the individual to protect the weak and the helpless under any conditions. The abuse of the smaller by the larger, and often more powerful, aroused the immanent sense of justice. That is all as it should be. However, unfortunately, we are often deceived by relative circumstances. We continue to protect the sovereignty of small nations, which should not continue as such in these times. It is not that the times have changed the principles of justice and that now we may sanction the oppression of the weak by the strong. It is rather that the conditions of today prevent many nations from ever being other than extremely weak, and thus they should not remain menaces to a world peace and security.

It may be inspiring to think of a comparatively small population isolated in the midst of an array of powerful nations defying all, in their desire for independence and survival as a nation. It appeals to the imagination and innate sportsmanship. The idealist, therefore, is desirous of aiding such a people in maintaining their sovereignty at all costs. But is such an attitude feasible? There is also an expedient approach to this problem of the freedom of a small nation.

What will their independence provide, which amalgamation with a more powerful neighbor will not? Let us presume that "A" constitutes a group of powerful nations. Each is wealthy with resources, with trade agreements, and access to great seaports. These nations are in a powerful economic and military position, and able to preserve their status. Further, their system of government is perhaps not extremely liberal, but neither is it despotic. Therefore, the populace of these powerful countries enjoys as much liberty, as a whole, as do the citizenry of any other nation less powerful, and far more than some.

On the other hand, "B" is a small nation. Actually it is an abortion. It is a land which was once whittled from a large sovereignty. In the intervening centuries, it has alternately been absorbed and then become separated many times. It has the right to grow as an independent nation, to have its own government, and to inflate its ego with the wind of *nationalism*. It can fly its own flag, have its own pitiful, inadequate army and navy, which, notwithstanding this inadequacy, constitutes a terrific tax burden to its comparatively small citizenry.

Now, what does all of this sovereignty of the small nation mean to its citizens? What are they gaining by living in a compressed territory, desired by all others? The citizen finds that he has no greater liberties than the citizen of the large, equally as liberal neighboring nations. He finds that he lacks many of the privileges and benefits which the citizens of these larger nations enjoy. His business opportunities are less. His nation has

not the varied resources in its contracted area to insure any degree of steady employment. He finds that his industries are unable to compete in world markets with more powerful neighbors. He is hemmed in by tariff walls, customs, and immigration restrictions whenever he wishes to move. The citizens in the large neighboring nations can bring goods to their factories from sources hundreds of miles distant, within the bounds of their own country, without duties and monetary restrictions. The citizen of the little nation, figuratively, can hardly turn around without confronting the restrictions which the smallness of his own country imposes upon him. Of course, these conditions likewise affect him culturally. Prosperity is a supporter of the arts and sciences. His government is *proud* of its sovereignty, but extremely impoverished and can do little for its citizens except to expound the "glories" of being an independent nation.

There is no hope for the future of such a nation. It cannot possibly grow. The most it can ever expect is a *status quo*. To the politicians of such a little nation, such sovereignty may have a very definite advantage. The politician may become a big fish in a very little pond. To the average citizen of the small nation, it is a discouraging, soul-depressing future which he faces. These circumstances result in the ambitious individual, the one with initiative and vision, eventually leaving his nation, migrating to one of the larger neighboring states where he perceives a possible personal future.

There is also the aspect of continual intrigue and pressure, to which the little nation is continually exposed. One of the powerful nations may assume that ultimately the little nation will disintegrate by its own lack of internal cohesion. This powerful nation desires that if that should happen, the little nation should not be absorbed by some rival. Consequently, it starts a campaign of indoctrination in the little sovereignty. It starts to influence the political parties of the little country. It hopes to put into power those who favor one powerful neighbor as against another. Eventually the little nation comes to realize that its sovereignty, its independence is, after all, a farce. It is being dominated politically by a neighbor, and *yet* it is not enjoying any of the advantages which the citizens of the powerful neighbor

do. Further, the little nation that opposes and *snubs* a powerful neighbor may eventually be a victim of aggression by it. When it is invaded, it will then be abused because of its former attitude. It cannot expect that other powerful nations to whom it will appeal will immediately rescue it. Two strong men, for analogy, who fear each other's strength, will often rather let one or the other abuse a weaker man than risk combat with each other by intervening.

Let us draw a circle upon a piece of paper, about four inches in diameter. Within this circle we will draw a dozen smaller circles, each about a quarter of an inch in diameter. Then we will draw four or five circles, each about one-sixteenth of an inch in diameter. The first, large circle, we will call the world. The dozen circles we shall name large nations. The smaller circles we shall term *small nations*. You will note when you have done this that there is a considerable space between the very little and the large circles, within the great big circle. This is a picture of the world as it was, shall we say, two hundred and fifty years ago. Between the large circles and the small ones in the area of the world, there was much room for expansion. Every little circle or nation could *grow*. It could spread out; it could add apparently new territories or holdings to itself, like a cell in the process of accretion. They could do this without too frequently pressing against the larger nations.

Time has changed this world picture. The circles are now pressing against each other. The world is crowded with nations and their possessions, and spheres of influence. The big nations are pressing toward each other, and in between are the smaller ones. As the pressure increases, the little ones crack and disintegrate, and are finally pressed into the form of the larger ones. This process will go on for many decades. How many, no one knows. It presages the eventual unity that will come out of the many. Nation after nation will be forced together. They will conflict; there often will be bloody interludes. Nationalism will ultimately go. There is no more room for separateness, only unity, a one world can survive.

Consequently, to be realistic, it is far better that some of the smaller nations of Europe be amalgamated with the more powerful ones. It is true they will sacrifice their

sovereignty as a nation, but they will gain greater freedom and opportunity for the citizen. The only danger lies in a corrupt neighbor's absorbing the smaller ones. However, if political despotism is stamped out of the world by a coalition of the powerful nations, then each little nation eventually becoming one with the larger remaining bodies, will be better serving its citizens.

There were many persons who were shocked at the recent developments at the Yalta Conference in the Crimea, with respect to the big powers' attitude toward the sovereignty of Poland, for example. On the surface, it seemed a violation of Poland as a nation. Realistically, a Poland politically amalgamated with Russia can accomplish for the people of Poland far more than they could ever expect to realize wedged in between Russia, Germany, and England. Poland has no more actual political sovereignty. She is politically entirely within the economic and military sphere of Russia. The fact that she is, is a guarantee that she will not be violated by any other powerful neighbor, at least not as often. The fact that she is able to retain her name and a semblance of sovereignty, as agreed upon by the Big Three, is only a concession to the die-hard tradition of nationalism, which eventually must go in the shrinking world of tomorrow.

Faternally,
RALPH M. LEWIS,
Imperator.

Debts Or Gifts—Which First?

A soror, I believe addressing this FORUM for the first time, asks: "When a person with a steady income is in debt and he or she desires to make presents to others, which should come first—the indebtedness paid, or gifts purchased? This is assuming, of course, that the gift would delay payment of the debt and if enough desires to give gifts were had, the debt might never be paid. I suppose that the desire to give presents is a spontaneous 'inner voice,' but also doesn't an inner voice obligate one to indebtedness?"

Debts and gifts, from the Cosmic point of view, involve human relationships, your conduct with your fellow humans. There are two different aspects of this same relationship. We might say that one is *positive* and the other *negative*. The positive aspect is

being moved by that expression of the inner self, which we know as love for humanity, or as compassion, to serve and to extend our affection to mankind. A gift may be motivated by the positive desire to do a charitable act, to provide something to alleviate human suffering. You give to the poor, to the hungry, to the needy. Your only compensation is the *inner* satisfaction you derive from the fulfillment of that urge, which you experience. Then, again, we give gifts, also as a positive action, because we like someone. We have an affection for them, and the object is a token of our esteem or our affection.

Such giving of gifts, as an indication of our emotional self and sentiments is quite instinctive. It is very primitive and elemental. It is not limited strictly to humans. Dogs have been known to share their foods with other animals, to take a bone to a less fortunate and hungry friend. Likewise, dogs have been known to drop their toys, as a ball, for example, at the feet of a four-footed friend, as an indication that they were sharing their treasures with him.

The negative aspect, from the Cosmic point of view, of this human relationship is *debts*. Debts, however, first begin as a positive but *objective* relationship. It may be a transaction which has no moral or spiritual impulse at its bottom; strictly one of expediency. For analogy, you may need money to take a trip to a distant city to see about obtaining an excellent position there. You borrow a sum from a friend for the purpose. So far, such relationship is positive but distinctly an objective or material transaction. It is positive on your part because you are the prime mover. You instituted the transaction. You asked for and negotiated a loan. Once you have borrowed the money, then the *negative* Cosmic aspect develops. This negative aspect consists in saying or doing nothing which will interfere with your moral obligation to this other person. If you undertake anything which disturbs that obligatory relationship, you bring either hurt to the one who loaned you the money or hurt to your own character. You pledged payment. That pledge represents to others your conception of truth, your moral conception of the right. To intentionally violate or deliberately make impossible the fulfillment of the pledge is to degrade the inner self. Consequently, you

cannot undertake any positive action, even if motivated by self, which will conflict with the Cosmic negative aspect—the debt.

In the instance of a debt, the negative Cosmic aspect has already been established. It has, to use the vernacular of the day, a priority on your inner self—it comes first because it is first.

This must not be taken to mean that when we have contracted obligations or debts—which most all of us have—we should not give any gifts. It does mean, however, that any positive acts motivated by self, as gifts, must be limited or restricted to the extent that they will not interfere with the payment of debts, the first and negative aspect of your self-expression, which has been already established. The failure to give a gift, where a debt makes it impossible, brings no injury because no relationship has yet been manifested objectively. There is no dependency upon you. Where you have a debt, you have something that already exists, an objective relationship, and you therefore must comply with the Cosmic principle not to disturb the moral obligation resting upon you. This may at times bring mental conflict. It may bring the personal polemic argument as to whether to neglect the debt or forget the gifts—or to make them less expensive. If, however, we weigh the values, meditate a moment, stop reasoning about it, the self, the conscience, will tell us that the negative aspect of the debt has priority, and if we do not comply with it, it can do harm to us or to the creditor.—X

Are Wealth and Mysticism Compatible?

Two fratres now ask our FORUM related questions. One frater asks: "How is the mastery of Cosmic law related to or influenced by a materialistic approach to the acquisition of material wealth and personal glory? I cannot convince myself that it is wise to reject the urge for material benefits and possibly some luxuries, in favor of total pursuit of inner peace and Cosmic Consciousness. I have held to the conviction that there should be some balance between the practices of the laws of God and those apparently necessary in pursuing economic wealth or at least security. This problem has been my major concern in approaching these studies that I am now receiving."

The other frater, from the Midwestern section of the United States, states: "In one of the monographs it says: 'consider what your motive is in seeking for that upon which you wish to concentrate. Are you seeking for self alone?' How do you reconcile this statement with many of the healings made by Christ? How about the blind beggar who asked for and received healing? Christ said: 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believe that ye have received and ye shall receive.'"

Let us begin with the question of the frater first above. As I see it, his questions resolve down to whether or not it is intrinsically wrong to acquire material wealth. By wrong, we mean morally and spiritually improper, or evil, if you will. If wealth is spiritually or Cosmically improper, then obviously any attempts to acquire it would be inconsistent with an attempt to become spiritually developed. We may, for our purposes, define wealth as an abundance of material things, or a means by which they can be acquired. Wealth is purely relative. It is not absolute. You are wealthy, depending on the value placed upon what you possess. A man who possesses a large quantity of gold is wealthy, as long as there is a demand for gold. Another man may consider himself wealthy because he has accumulated the largest collection of an odd assortment of fishhooks. Collecting the hooks is his hobby. Each one has value to him. The larger the number, the greater his wealth in these things to himself and to all who think as he does. Obviously, then, wealth can and does, in all parts of the world, consist of almost everything.

Since no one thing represents wealth, the things of wealth are not intrinsically evil. There are those who actually believe gold and silver are imbued with an evil power because they have been long associated with a pernicious use of wealth. Such a belief is purely animism, and should not be considered by intelligent persons. If the things of wealth cannot be intrinsically evil or opposed to spiritual ends, then what of wealth may be corrupt? The answer is—the power which it may bring to bear. You cannot separate wealth from power. If wealth is an accumulation of something which others value and desire, then it has a power. It is a commodity which we can use effectively to buy materials, purchase service, as well as to influence people. Just as some unthinking

people are inclined to believe that the things of wealth are evil, so some likewise think that its power is also evil. Power is a concentration of energy, of things or conditions. In itself, a power is purposeless; therefore, it is neither good nor evil, constructive nor destructive. It is the mind behind the power that puts it to use, that can make its results appear as good or evil. The power of wealth which is used to build schools, libraries, museums, and hospitals is the same power that is used to tear down public morals and corrupt government. The power of wealth is needed, and individuals should be permitted to acquire and to exercise it so long as they disclose no improper motive in so doing.

Should a person make wealth his goal? As a matter of fact, as I have written previously on this subject, one cannot set out to make wealth his goal. He first has to have that which amounts to wealth. You just don't begin to be wealthy. You first must become a success in some enterprise which will provide wealth. But suppose one wants to be a success in an enterprise or profession so that he may eventually be wealthy? Is he thwarting or opposing spiritual idealism, and perhaps burying it beneath a maze of material realities? We answer that by saying, it depends. If the individual is not avaricious, has not just a love of possessions; if, in fact, he wants wealth to further not only himself personally, but some humanitarian ideal which was engendered by his spiritual sentiments and impulses, then he is not acting contrary to self.

One must have a very balanced nature, it is admitted, and must discipline himself, to be a success materially and yet be able to move toward mystical attainment. If one does not let business pursuits cause him to violate his moral precepts and the dictates of conscience, he is safe. If he does not let his material interests deprive him of opportunities for introspection, reflection, and study, he may still be a mystic and a successful business man. I have known, and know several men who are successful in the advertising, banking, industrial, and trade worlds. They are wealthy men, and yet they are deep students of mysticism and Rosicrucianism. They not only study mysticism and the AMORC teachings, but they apply the precepts in their business transactions. They have time and again used portions of their

wealth to further those aims developed out of their meditations.

Let us not forget that man is a *dual being*, both physical and spiritual. He has a right to economically secure the welfare of his physical existence by wealth. If he does not use this wealth exclusively for his own benefit or the detriment of others, he is not interfering with the evolution of his soul-personality. Rational, Western mysticism does not sanction asceticism, self-abnegation, the denial of comfort and even reasonable luxuries. Instead it advocates the acquisition of *mystical illumination*, which permits a Cosmic direction of life here and now, according to Cosmic and natural laws.

As for the second frater's questions, we have a right to ask in prayer for ourselves, for health, for aid with worldly problems, so long as such appeals are not motivated by avarice and cupidity. If we wish to get well so that we may not be a hindrance to ourselves and others, then we are justified to ask for Divine assistance. Yes, most assuredly, we can ask for things from which we will directly benefit, providing our intent or moral is right. That is why we stress consideration of the intent and whether the limited self alone is going to be benefited. Certainly the frater would not interpret his Biblical quotation to mean that Christ would answer *any prayer*, regardless of what the supplicant asked. Certainly we cannot pray to wreak vengeance upon another. Most assuredly we cannot pray to gain unjustly another's possessions. If it were just sufficient to set into motion a certain ritual or rite, or to pray, in other words, then prayer could be used as an instrument to oppose Cosmic laws. We would have the situation, to use an analogy, where prayer as a Cosmic law would be like a log lying crossways in the Cosmic stream and damming up the orderly flow of its intent.—X

Is There A Collective Conscience?

A soror associated with our staff arises and addresses this FORUM. She says: "One of our monographs states, in part: 'Each godly home, each sacred domicile, each den or chamber, room or cave, grotto or temple, inhabited by God-loving, tolerant and kindly natures—filled with vibrations of goodness, mystical understanding, and Divine attune-

ment—is watched over by this invisible guardian, who warns away intrusion and who sounds a note of clear warning when evil approaches.' My question is: Is this conscience guarding the home, etc., a collective conscience, or some separate entity?"

A place becomes a sanctuary by the manner in which it is consecrated by human action and thought. A temple is not sacred by virtue of its name, nor even the purpose for which it was constructed, or because of the site, or the intrinsic value of the materials of which it is composed. It is made sacred by the *mystical transmutation* of the vibrations of its environment. Regardless of opposition that may arise through the following statement, I affirm that material objects and substances are definitely affected by the human aura and by concentrations of thought brought to bear upon them. I do not mean that our thoughts and feelings, which naturally vary the human aura, actually alter, as a physical transformation, every material object which comes into the sphere of their influence. I do mean, however, that very intense emotional states greatly intensify the radiations of the human aura, cause the molecular nature of substances near them to absorb some of the tangible vibrations of the aura. It is as though the material substance could store these radiations for a limited time, as a metal may become magnetized, and then, in turn, emanate these radiations to a lesser degree. To use an analogy, it is like some substances which retain the fragrance of a perfume long after the one who had it upon her person has left the vicinity.

It is not an uncommon experience, perhaps you have had it, for one to feel depressed in certain strange rooms, in a hotel or in public buildings, or, conversely, to be highly elated. In such an environment there may be nothing visible which, by suggestion, would cause us to have such sensations. However, investigation has revealed many times that in such a place incidents involving great human misery, suffering, grief, or the opposite—intense happiness and inspiration—occurred over quite a long period of time.

These conditions apply to a place used for religious or sacred purposes. Each votary, each adherent who enters there, moved by the better part of himself, by devotion, and by spiritual love, deposits something of his nature within the area and thereby trans-

mutes it into a sacred place. A place where one invokes the presence of God by prayer or meditation, or by communion with the Cosmic takes on an atmosphere of tranquility, of quiet exhilaration, that is sensed by everyone who enters, even those who are not mystically or religiously inclined. The very air seems charged with the higher positive vibrations of the aura. Have you not observed persons, who may be just tourists sightseeing, who are permitted to go into what was once a sacred site or the ruins of a temple. Historically, they may know little about the place. They may never have had any knowledge of the rites and ceremonies which were used therein. Up until the time of their entrance, they may have been loud and boisterous. Most times, for reasons they cannot explain, the majority will be reserved in their manner, more quiet in their gestures, and even speak in a hushed voice. You have undoubtedly often sensed this feeling when you have been in the sanctum of a member, or visited a little cross-roads church. However, this condition of sacred feeling and mystical vibration, and this feeling of goodness is often lacking in stately cathedrals. In some such lofty edifices, magnificent in their appointments, there is no conduciveness to rest. One may actually feel ill at ease and depressed.

We know that our *conscience*, the moral self is always closely attuned with the Divine Mind, and therefore does become the guardian of our threshold. It warns us against our own conduct and thoughts, and that which is contrary to spiritual inclinations and soul impulses. It also makes us alert to dangers. When we are in a sanctuary or place consecrated to and used for Divine purposes, the sensitivity of our own conscience is quickened—self is awakened. We are raised to a more lofty plane of consciousness and awareness by the vibratory conditions within the edifice or place. We find ourselves more easily put in rapport with the self within—or conscience. It is for this reason that attunement with the inner self is preferred and sought in a sanctuary—your sanctum, your cathedral, your church around the corner. *Inspiration, guidance, protection*—these are often experienced in such an environment.

The experiences within a sanctuary—that is, inspiration, guidance, and so on—are not

always just the result of your individual conscience. Such experiences may be due to the projected psychic selves of others. A sanctuary becomes a place of attraction, a place where those who meditate find their thoughts and psychic consciousness converging. Often in meditation, you have been suddenly aware of yourself in some unfamiliar place, but one that is most gratifying, soothing, ecstatic in its effects. It often may be a temple in the Orient, a Mohammedan Mosque, or an altar upon some mountain. The self, when released by meditation, when freed for a few minutes from objective consciousness, if it is not directed to any particular place, is most often drawn to an environment harmonious to its own nature. It is just like a child when he is permitted to leave his home and to go out of doors for a few minutes; if he has no particular mission, he is attracted to other children because of similar interests and harmony of thought. Therefore, a sanctuary often becomes a repository for the spiritual selves of those distant and in meditation and prayer. Often such persons are not fully aware that their psychic selves have been to such a sanctuary. It may have been an unconscious projection.

While the psychic self is at such a sanctuary, it adds to the *positive, spiritual, vibratory* qualities of its environment, like a breath of fresh air or a beam of sunlight entering a closed space, if someone opens a window or raises a shade. This collection of thoughts, of vibrations of the higher selves of persons, concentrated in a sanctuary or sanctum, amount to a *collective conscience*. Such selves immediately rebel and withdraw from any conditions or any circumstances that are contrary to the Cosmic, for they are functioning on the *Cosmic plane*. Any disturbance of them would obviously affect the vibratory conditions of the sanctuary. If you are present, your inner self, *your conscience* would detect this change immediately and it would be translated to your objective consciousness as a warning. The warning might not take the form of a particular description or explanation of the cause of the change, but you would sense it perhaps by being ill at ease and becoming alert and cautious. Therefore, in such a place consecrated to truth and Cosmic law, we have as well as our own conscience the influences of the psychic selves who revel in sanctuaries, as a *collective conscience*.—X

The Ouija Board Craze

A frater from New York addresses this FORUM: "Since being a member, I do not recall this FORUM's ever discussing the subject of the Ouija board. This subject should interest any Rosicrucian, or at least cause him to question the validity of the results of the operation of the board. Is the Ouija board a means of entertainment, to be taken lightly, or is it a means of reliable information? Personally, I cannot understand it, and it has me thinking. Is there any reliable solution? I am seeking an answer."

The Ouija board came into prominence in the United States after World War I. It was introduced from Europe, where it had existed for some time in various forms. It has persisted since then, but it is extremely popular again, due to the emotional instability caused by the circumstances of the times. For the benefit of those who may not know exactly what the Ouija board, or planchette is, we shall explain. It is a board, upon the face of which are arranged letters of the alphabet, figures, and certain other characters. Upon this rests a small board or pointer, which serves as a pen or pencil when in the operator's hand. By means of this, he *automatically* or without volition spells out words to compose messages. It is the assumption on the part of most users that some intelligence or psychic power beyond their own personality is the cause of such messages. In many instances, the phenomenon is quite mysterious or uncanny. This adds to its attractiveness to many minds.

It is during times of great emotional stress that the average individual is inclined to this and similar practices. Extreme emotionalism causes a decline in the usual reasoning. The emotional feelings brush aside rationalism. Further, the average individual in a crisis is often unable to so marshall his thoughts and his will power as to gain sufficient control over himself and thereby surmount whatever obstacles confront him. It is a psychological fact that a weakened physical condition lessens will power and self control. The essential of will is the focusing of the strength of mind. A person who is very ill finds it extremely difficult to muster sufficient energy to discipline and control the emotions. He will weep easily at that which is sad and will laugh often almost hysterically at a

slightly amusing incident. When one is desperate because of circumstances which engender great emotional stress, he is inclined to believe that his personal powers have been truncated. Because of the fear that grips him, he frantically seeks an external source or power which he can depend upon, or which at least will be able to supplant his own deficiency. Since the Ouija board or planchette seems to provide a channel or become a medium through which information and guidance can be had, such an individual resorts to it.

War produces a sense of helplessness among many of the civilian population who have sons, fathers, or husbands in the service. They feel unable to render them assistance in their time of need. This helplessness precipitates fears and often an unthinking. This in turn encourages recourse to any practices which purport to provide helpful information about a loved one in imminent danger. Further, grief for one who has actually passed on is often the motivating factor for one resorting to such strange methods. There is the hope of renewing the bond with the deceased. Since women are more emotional than men, in times such as these they are more often the victims of the Ouija board craze. Frequently persons indulge in it with friends, with an open attitude of skepticism. The inexplicable occurrences, the strange phenomenon puzzles and impresses them until they become unquestioning devotees of it.

Ouija board phenomenon is *automatic writing*. As William James, eminent psychologist, has said, it is the lowest form of mediumship and the lowest grade of this practice is where the subject, knowing the source of his communication, nevertheless feels impelled to write. The individual allows the objective self to be excluded from reasoning and from conscious participation in the experience. He excludes his objective self, even though he realizes the initiative for his acts comes from elsewhere. In psychical research, or psychic phenomena, there is what is known technically as *cryptesthesia*. This means a psychic sensitivity to knowledge that is obtained by other than the commonly objective manner. Our conscious mind, or state of consciousness, functions *dually*. There are some who hold that we have two minds or selves, the objective and

subjective. Then, again, there are others who contend that we have but one self. At times it is objective in its functioning and at other times subjective. We shall presume, for explanation here, that there are both an objective self and a subjective mind or self.

Most of our conscious acts, those that we remember objectively, are registered as well in the subjective mind. In sleep, they often recur as dreams, even though they may have happened in reality years ago, perhaps in childhood. Further, many experiences which we have had, such as, shocks or momentary deep fears, the incidents of which we have forgotten entirely, are nevertheless registered in the subjective mind. Consequently, when they are released again in the objective mind, they have an originality. They seem as a new idea or concept to our objective consciousness. Since they have not been reasoned about—that is, have not been properly organized and are haphazard in their release—they are often distorted and frightening. It is like a man who when occupied with one thing—namely, thinking of something else—is at the same time putting a number of objects absent-mindedly upon a closet shelf without any order or arrangement. Some time afterward, not realizing that these objects are there and piled without any security on the top shelf of the closet, he opens the door quickly. Down upon him fall the objects with an alarming clatter and very confusing array, surprising, perhaps shocking him.

Then, again, our objective self has its *secondary personality*. Our primary personality is the one which we manifest to others and which we are conscious that we are. Our secondary personality may be the one which we are fearsome of becoming, or the change we want to make in ourselves. It may also be the personality we would like to mimic or to imitate. Quite often we will not ever express to others that we consider ourselves weak in certain of our emotions, habits, or virtues. In our minds, we will associate this weakness with certain people. It seems to correspond to their conduct. We may liken it unto characters whom we may despise, whom we have met or read about. Thus these ideas, in the subjective, become our secondary personality. It is, of course, not the psychic or spiritual self. There are many ways in which this secondary personality, or the subjective thought process (and having

nothing to do with the Cosmic mind) may come to the fore.

Cryptesthesia, which we have mentioned, may be either *accidental* or *experimental*. Accidental cryptesthesia is where suddenly, as a monition—that is, as a sudden announcement or inspiration—thoughts will come to the fore of the objective or the outer mind. Sometimes such thoughts are logical, clear, and with specific meaning, as a kind of knowledge which proves to be useful. Such are pragmatic truths and may be caused by mental telepathy; in other words, by being momentarily in attunement with the mind of another. Often such monitions or psychic knowledge about something is proven to be veridical by subsequent investigation. Inspirational knowledge or noetic experience—that is, new knowledge which comes by this means of cryptesthesia—is a Cosmic divulgence. In such instances, there is *never* fear or confusion related to the experience. There is always ecstasy and uplift, a feeling of exaltation. On the other hand, *experimental cryptesthesia* is where the individual intentionally suppresses the objective mind or self, and further leaves himself without any preparation, and without understanding, to the impressions which may come haphazardly from the secondary personality or the subjective.

In the case of automatic writing or Ouija board practice, the subject sets himself before the board and places his hands lightly on the inscriber or pointer which is upon the large board. He asks the board aloud, or to himself, a question. He then waits for the involuntary jerking of his arm, a muscular contraction, which causes him to move the pointer across the surface of the large board, stopping at letters of the alphabet, then at figures, so as to spell out a cryptic answer. If such a person is sincere in this practice, the answers he receives he usually accepts as coming from some intelligence extraneous to his own mind. Obviously such a subject would not be a devotee of this practice if he thought the message was being transmitted to him solely from within the recesses of his own mind.

As explained, sometimes the messages are not intelligible; they are but a jumble of words. At other times, they may be but a simple "yes" or "no" to a question. The result may be either what the subject de-

sires or what he fears, depending upon which sentiment and emotion related to the question has made the strongest impression upon his subjective self. Further (and this is what makes the practice so acceptable to some subjects), names, personalities, and places are often spelled which the subject truthfully can say he does not recall ever having heard or seen. This causes him to believe that the information imparted to him must originate from some extraneous intelligence. He does not realize that there is much registered in the subjective which he has forgotten, or of the cause of which he is unaware, and that it can produce the thought impressions he now has. Sometimes a shock or fear had when a child will deeply affect this latent part of our mind. The subjective will assign to the experience ideas, certain qualities, as incidents and persons, which the emotional disturbance actually did not have originally related to it. During such an uncontrolled and *undirected* subjective state, as when one is using a Ouija board, such images or thoughts will then be released to the objective mind. The subject will be aware of the original shock, with all of its emotional disturbances—that is, he will experience it again—but there will be associated with it now *unfamiliar incidents*, names of persons, places, or things. Consequently, the subject believes that he has suddenly been put in touch with some evil force or entity. Several such experiences may, if the subject does not come to understand them, seriously affect his sanity.

Numerous experiments have been conducted in psychic research to prove that the overwhelming majority of such "messages" and ideas received by means of automatic writing or the Ouija board strictly originate with this secondary personality, or the uncontrolled subjective. For example, a young woman who had been writing automatically was asked to recall the name of a gentleman she had once seen. Objectively she was unable to recollect the first syllable. Her hand, however, without her knowledge, wrote down the last two syllables. The American Society of Psychical Research reports a subject who was in a partial trance state and using a planchette, and who had his hands pricked by the investigator. The moving hand had no sensation to the subject. It was entirely under the domination of the subjective. This

hand, however, wrote out a protest against the pain inflicted upon it. When the other relaxed hand was pricked, the subject objectively felt the pain and it brought forth a cry.

The Ouija board, when one is naturally hypersensitive, sometimes makes mental telepathy quite facile, because the subject is more in a subjective than an objective state. Consequently, he is brought into attunement with minds whose thoughts he receives and which his own subjective self causes him or her to involuntarily write. Such examples are rare. They are usually easily proven to be telepathic. In the majority of instances, the individual practicing automatic writing or using the Ouija Board is being deceived by his secondary personality; that is, he is answering his own questions. He is not being *guided* by any intelligence or power. He is simply putting himself at the mercy of unorganized, latent impressions which he is unconsciously digging from the depths of his own subjective memory. The more unfamiliar such impressions or experiences, the more certain the subject is that he is communicating with another intelligence. Often the incongruity and irrationality of the impression received will greatly shock the individual; may cause him to have a phobia, which will dominate him for years.

Recently such a case came to my attention. She is a very charming elderly woman. Some women friends of hers had induced her to "sit in" at a Ouija board seance with them. These women were strict religionists but were victims of the craze caused by the emotionalism of the times. The elderly woman sat opposite another at the board, and several questions were asked. The replies were pleasing and intriguing. The elderly woman and the others knew nothing of the fundamental principles underlying their acts. She was led to believe that she was being reached by some intelligence apart from herself. She was reluctant to proceed with such practices. She felt that she was delving into something which perhaps was not proper, yet the fascination was too strong for her. Later, when alone, she tried the Ouija board. Suddenly a message was spelled out which was to the effect that she was damning God, and that her soul was forever to be doomed to Hell and torment because of what she was

doing. Over and over the words rang in her consciousness as she realized what she had spelled out. She was shocked nearly into senselessness. She was being damned by God! She was to suffer great torment. The woman was frantic at the experience. Whenever she relaxed thereafter, the thought possessed her. The phobia had been established, and she was haunted by the fear and could not rid herself of it.

What was the cause? Her practice with the Ouija board had, from the very beginning, been contrary to her moral and ethical propriety. It was contrary to those principles and beliefs, the result of her rationalism. This delving into something which appeared to be supernatural, each time she practiced it was offending her latent principles. Finally, when once trying the Ouija board, the subjective revolt manifested itself. Really her own self objected, but the objection was couched in words of her subjective thoughts; namely, that she was doing something irreligious or sacrilegious. She had never placed these innate objections in words. *The subjective did.* It seemed as though God was reproaching her, consequently the shock. I had great difficulty in explaining that it was *her own self* reproaching her, and the form which it had taken—the actual words and sentences—was an expression of the latent fear she had always had that she might be offending God. In addition, at the time, she was ill and was unable to resist the fear which had been implanted by her subjective personality. She is now taking treatment for her general health. With the recovery of her health, her *will* will be sufficiently strong to establish counter suggestions, as the result of her understanding of what actually occurred. In time, she will regain her composure.

Do not delve into Ouija board practices for entertainment. After all, if you know the factors, it is not entertaining. If you do not know them, it is dangerous to continue the practice. Only psychic research experimenters and students under the direction of competent instructors should investigate such phenomena—and then they should have a strictly open mind and a rational point of view. They should never have any false presumptions that they are delving into supernatural powers or entities.—X.

The Rise and Fall of Civilizations

A member commenting upon the social, political, and economic conditions in the world of today has asked whether or not we believe that the present world conflict may spell the end of civilization as we know it. It is probable that no one can foresee the correct answer to this question for the simple reason that we, from the viewpoint of human beings, cannot piece together all the causes and effects necessary to bring about a fair analysis of these conditions. The outcome lies not in the intensity of conflict and trouble, but in the methods by which humans try to readjust themselves.

In this sense a civilization can be compared to an individual life. We well know of many illustrations where people have been faced by extreme periods of adjustment, because of accident, ill health, or loss of financial resources, and which necessitated the changing of their whole lives. Some do not recover from such conditions—they give up. Others are willing to take the experience as a lesson and try to rebuild their lives, and there have been those who have built better than they did before, because they have been able to accept the experience as a means of direction toward a better life.

The same circumstances apply in general to a civilization. Civilization can go through mighty conflicts and periods of adjustment and will survive or fail, depending upon how the results of the condition are used. If we can make a peace that will be permanent due to the sincere desire upon the part of the participants in this peace to have that state come about, civilization will be benefited, even though its benefit will have come at a terrific price. However, if the individual nations and the persons composing these nations are set completely upon benefiting their own selfish interests and thereby lose sight of a lasting peace, then civilization may be in the balances; at least, it would have to be tried again, and such a trial might be too severe for it to survive.

Throughout history civilizations have risen to certain heights and then receded. Any student of history can cite many illustrations of those groups of people who have forged ahead and reached a high state of culture, merely to go back to almost a primitive state again; then, other civilizations have de-

veloped, and we must bear in mind that a civilization is no more or less than the united concepts of the individuals who compose that particular civilization. There have been many theories advanced as to the cause of the rise and fall of cultures, but probably all, while containing some truth, have not been complete or adequate. At least we do know that theories have not saved civilizations, because adequate theories were formulated by philosophers hundreds of years ago and yet cultures have risen and been forgotten.

The answer to the question of the meaning of this movement of history and the rise and fall of cultures lies in the concept of life which must be viewed from out as well as from within our environment. The history of civilization is, in a sense, a stage upon which the drama of culture and human adjustment takes place, and we being participants in this drama fail to see it from the standpoint we could if we were detached onlookers.

We have compared civilization to the individual. This comparison may be carried even further. We understand that our bodies are the form, or the vehicle, into which the soul reincarnates to give that body expression and purpose. In this sense, then, the capacity of the vehicle—that is, our body—will be the determining factor as to the development of the soul that will fill that vehicle or form. As our bodies are to the reincarnating individual soul, so nations and cultures are related to the individuals who incarnate through these particular cultures. In this sense we might think of a civilization as the body of a vehicle of an entire people, and as such, subject to the same conditions which bring about birth, growth, and decay, just as our own physical bodies.

This concept of reincarnation gives us some understanding of the cause and purpose of civilizations and cultures. These cultures are in a form of vehicle just as the human body, and since any form has a limit or a capacity, this kind of form, too, may reach a point where it can be filled no more. In the past, all these various civilizations gradually advanced to that point where the more advanced souls—that is, those who would be the leaders—could not find fulfillment of their own Karma within the scope of such a civilization.

These highest-evolved souls cannot reincarnate within the limitations of the cultures which they have outgrown, and so when this condition comes about such a civilization begins to recede. It no longer can be the greatest culture or point of progress of the human race, since it can no longer attract, through the experience which it holds, the highest-developed soul personalities and leaders to direct the destiny of mankind. Such a civilization may continue to exist for a time. It serves the simple Karmic needs of certain individuals, but from the standpoint of leadership among individuals and among groups, it no longer is adequate.

The question is whether or not it is necessary for a civilization to recede or whether we can, by intelligent direction, maintain such high standards, such aims and ideals, so that the civilization itself may not be limited. In the scheme of things this may be possible. We do not know, but it may be that the destiny of the human race is to create the society in which man will be able to continue to reincarnate indefinitely, or at least as long as experience is needed on this physical plane. If that is the case, then it becomes a part of the Karma of each of us to contribute our share to the maintenance of those ideals and principles in support of that civilization which will hold out unlimited scopes and possibilities of function for the highest type of individuals. If this is to be brought about, then each individual is obligated to aspire to the highest ideals possible, so that the general culture or civilization of which he is a part will never be lost for lack of attraction for growth, and will continue to fill the need of a place for man's development on earth.—A.

End of the World

A frater arises to propound a most intriguing and profound question to our FORUM. He says: "I am interested in eschatological theories—the doctrine of 'last things.' What is the Rosicrucian conception of the end of the world, of nature, and of man?"

Eschatology, or the doctrine of last things, is more commonly associated with religion and theological dogma. In fact, it plays a very prominent part in nearly all religion. For example, every religion or philosophy which advocates *immortality*, the survival of

the soul or personality after death, is expounding eschatology. What is theorized as the *end* of any existing state or condition is an eschatological concept. Speculation on these ends is as old as the beginnings of the history of thought. All peoples, including the Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, had liturgies and doctrines presaging and explaining the catastrophic end of the world, its future renewal, the state of the dead, and so forth. The Greeks and early Romans held that those who offended the gods, after death would be confined to Tartarus. The Andaman Islanders believe that the spirits of men—not their souls—after death are sent to a vast jungle beneath the flat earth. Eventually, earthquakes will cause this flat earth to turn over and the remaining living will be beneath and the dead restored to their places above.

This doctrine of ends is rooted in certain psychological functions of the human mind. It is engendered from the limits of human perception and primitive thinking. Man is *causative*. He is quite conscious of the fact that by his own thoughts and consequent actions, he puts things into motion. A thousand times a day we *begin* something. We pick up a paper. We take a step. We call someone into our presence. This beginning is the creating, or starting of something that so far as we are aware did not exist in exactly the same manner previously. We may have often picked up a pencil to write. However, each time we pick it up, that begins an event or happening which is not continuous with the one before, so far as we can determine. It appears as a separate occurrence which we began. In our minds, we frequently establish ends for the acts which we have begun. Such an end is the fulfillment of some purpose we have, or something which, to us appears as a distinct manifestation. For example, I want to write my name on a piece of paper. I begin by picking up the pen. I end when my signature is on the paper, when the purpose is fulfilled.

Let us presume I see a door *beginning* to close. The only finality to such an act, as far as I am concerned, is when the door is actually closed. The only conclusion which the movement of the door itself could suggest is that it will become closed. Therefore, the beginning of such an act suggests its own end. What I did not perceive was perhaps

a slight breeze as a cause which started the door moving. Beyond the breeze there may have been some motion which caused it. Still beyond that was whatever caused the motion. All such would be beginnings of the door's starting to close. In fact, we might continue going back, ad infinitum; to try and find the true beginning of the door's closing, only to discover that there never was any beginning, one thing always leading to another. What we conceived of as the beginning was that particular cause which we were capable of perceiving by our faculty of sight. All of the others were beyond our discernment.

To use this same analogy, in all probability, the *end* of such an action was not at the time when we saw the door closed. Beyond that which we saw, there might have been a pressure exerted upon the supporting framework of the door by its closing. Further, there could have been a transmission of vibrations from the impact of the closing, throughout the whole structure. Such vibrations might have caused objects to slightly move on the wall, or dust to be dislodged, which would in turn change slightly the brilliance of the color design on a carpet lying beneath. So, we might go on forever trying to find an end to the action of the door's closing. We would eventually concede that the closing of the door was only the end of our ability to discern what happened thereafter. Such presumed beginnings and ends of things, or ones which we arbitrarily establish ourselves, are so common to us that it is most difficult to conceive that something could be without beginning and end.

The notion of beginning and end is also due to the apparent separateness of things in their seeming existence in space. Here is an apple. There is a paper weight. They are vastly different in form and many other qualities. Between them is space which, to the objective senses, is a condition of nothing. To my consciousness, where the apple takes on its form in space is its beginning. Where the paper weight or the space begins is where the apple, as such, ends or has its limits. That there may be in that little space between the two—that is, between the apple and the paper weight—a universe of energy, a scale of electronic motion by which the apple and the paper weight are actually linked together is beyond the objective senses

to perceive. Consequently, the apple, the paper weight, and the space between them, to my consciousness, each has a beginning and an end.

It is extremely difficult for the average man and woman of today to conceive that the universe or cosmos, as a whole, always existed. They think, and find it more compatible with their everyday experience to believe, that the heavens were created at one time out of nothing. It is very difficult for them to conceive that *nothing* could not be. That there was and must have always been *something*. The idea of infinity or continuum is most difficult to grasp. It is contrary to human experience. There is absolutely nothing which we can objectively perceive, because of the way we are constituted, that has such a quality as infinity. The sky has its boundaries of clouds or the horizon—the sea likewise. The senses also have their limits of perception. It follows, then, and seems to the average person almost apodictical that there must be a beginning and an ending to all things.

The next step in such an order of thinking—that is, for those who are inclined to believe that there are absolute beginnings and ends—is to try and explain the nature of eventual ends which have not as yet been experienced. The conception of the end of the world has been a popular one with peoples of all times. At one time, it was estimated that the cessation of the world would occur at a time approximately two thousand years after the date of creation, as given in the Book of Genesis. Various Christian sects have interpreted Biblical terminology as predicting the specific date of the world catastrophe, and the parousia or second coming of Christ.

The Rosicrucian conception of an end of the world is strictly the physical or scientific conception. It means either the disintegration of the earth or that transition of its climatic and other physical conditions as will make it no longer inhabitable by man or any expression of life.

Have we any proof that the earth will cease to be as it now exists? There are no proofs, but there are astronomical and geological speculations based upon study of the cosmic bodies in space and the strata of the earth itself. There is every indication in the reaches of space and, in fact, in our own

stellar system, of other planets having undergone drastic changes in relation to their suns, that our earth will pass through. There are indications that they were once bodies in space having conditions similar to ours now. These bodies are dead, without atmosphere or life of any kind, even microscopic.

This assumption, however, that the earth at some time will no longer be habitable conflicts with the assumptions of many religionists. They like to believe that the earth was specifically chosen by God as the theatre of man's existence—man, in their estimation, being the central purpose of all Cosmic phenomena. The earth, therefore, to them, must eternally defy all laws of change which apply to other heavenly bodies. Presuming that the cosmological and astronomical assumptions that the earth will some day cease to be, or at least be no longer habitable, are right, does that mean the end of man? In all probability, yes. In the Cosmic order or scheme of things, the great Cosmic Soul may no longer need to experience itself in human consciousness; therefore, the human consciousness may cease to be.

Again, since we know that the phenomena of the Cosmic is cyclical, it is remotely possible that life and consciousness may begin a new cycle elsewhere, perhaps in one of the island universes thousands of light years distant from our milky way, in which our own earth exists as a speck. *Change* is a law which every intelligent person is able to recognize in the study of nature, nature being an expression of the Cosmic being. For our earth to persist as it is would be a defiance of this law of change. I have not the slightest doubt that at a remote time mankind will cease to be. In fact, even before then, men as we know them will be as different from the future man as the primitive Pithecanthropus erectus is from the Homo sapiens or modern man. As to nature, it can never have an end, if we mean by nature the underlying laws which give *Cosmic Being* its expression. The manifestations of nature must change. Nature, however, cannot be removed unless the great Cosmic ceases to be, which is an impossibility—because nothing is an impossibility without *something*. Nature is an intrinsic characteristic of the Cosmic. It, for analogy, is like the sound of a call; one is the result of the other. Cause produces its effects. The Cosmic is the cause of nature, nature

being its phenomenal appearance. Every end is but a transition to a new beginning, so let us not deeply concern ourselves with ends.
—X.

Good and Evil

The problem of good and evil is one that has been discussed by thinkers and philosophers throughout all time. In any age and in any individual's life, the problem does not fail to appear at one time or another, so it is not usual that to those of this organization the problems evident in the world today should give rise to the repetition of the question as to what is the status of evil in the world.

We cannot hope to solve the problem, but we can gain our own understanding of it through consideration and analysis. By evil, we mean anything that interferes with our most cherished plans or hopes, or anything which, by its interference, causes something which we are doing to be stopped; interference with the accomplishment of a plan, or that which in final analysis causes us to suffer pain of either body or mind. In the objective sense we can classify evil into two types. One of these is commonly referred to as natural evil. This category includes evils that are beyond human control and which are due to the processes or forces of nature. Then, there is the other category of evils which are at least somewhat within the power of man to control, usually referred to as moral evils. These might include disease and moral problems, such as, sin, vice, crime, and similar categories.

The pessimist, in considering natural evils, is inclined to agree that the world is against him—that every action of nature is to be considered as something which man must fight. This viewpoint has been expounded by philosophers and thinkers alike, and it leads up to the pessimistic conclusion that it would be better if we were never born—that life is futile in the face of trying to live in competition with forces which exist about us, and bring about earthquakes, floods, and interference with our plans, and over which we have no control whatsoever. There are those, however, who claim that human life is more than the pursuit of illusions, that good does exist and consists of not alone the attainment of pleasure, but rather is a condition that can

grow and bring about a feeling of satisfaction. We cannot prove that there is more pleasure than pain in the world, or that one is greater than the other; but we do know that with the advancement of man as a thinking being, he is certainly in a position to feel more keenly the existence of evil.

The minds of animals are probably not primarily concerned with painful memories or anticipation of future difficulties. As far as we know, the animal mind concerns itself with the present. As the human is sensitive to these natural evils, so is he sensitive to what good he seems to find in life, and it becomes impossible for him to balance the good and the evil that seem to befall him. In spite of the fact that there is a constant possibility of suffering in human life, the ultimate fact is that most people seem to obtain considerable satisfaction from life. Even though to many individuals it may seem that there are fewer moments of happiness than of sadness or thwarted hopes, it does not necessarily follow that most people find life worthless. Those who suffer the most are frequently not the ones who are the pessimists. In spite of their pain, they find many satisfactions in life.

In the contemplation of many ideals, even in the consideration of nature, of beauty and of truth, we do not always strive against hostile forces, but find in the process itself a satisfaction that is closely akin to happiness. Thus it is in the final analysis upon the part of intelligent beings, that all the shortcomings of our existence over which we have no control, such as, desire, want, pain, and craving, are not altogether necessarily evil. They are certain conditions of existence that cause life to be fuller. They keep us mentally and physically in action. The experience causes our outlook to be enlarged. We learn and organize the accumulated knowledge, and therefore, are better able to formulate our ultimate purposes; and our personality development is increased.

Moral evil is strictly a social condition. If an individual lived entirely by himself, he would suffer natural evil and natural pleasures, but the evils connected with the fulfillment of duty, fear of punishment, desire for approval, guilt or sin, would not be known to him. Moral evil is closely related to man's choice. He does not choose evil with intent to commit it. He merely chooses

evil because he believes he is choosing between two possible ways of life or methods of approach; and because of something lacking either in his outlook or general understanding, he fails to see the consequences of moral evil. Even moral evil is the test of man's living with man. If we are to develop free personalities, we must have the choice of experiencing that which is proven to be evil.

Thus we see in this brief survey of the more or less arbitrary classification of evil that both seem to be ways of testing man's development. The only satisfactory explanation of these conditions is the working of the law of Karma—in it we see that man will compensate for all choices which he makes and will gain in being thwarted or being helped by the consequences of his desires. There is one factor from the occult and Rosicrucian standpoint that we must not lose sight of. First of all, we must remember that we cannot ignore evil. When philosophers speak of the problem of evil, they are speaking of a thing very real to each human being, but from the occult sense, its reality is subordinated to the good. There are many opposites in the world, positive and negative, light and darkness, good and evil, but in all cases the positive, the light, the good, are in existence with a closer relation with the true reality of the universe than are the negative, the darkness, and the evil.

When, from an occult interpretation, the over-all assertion is made that since evil is negative and nonexistent, we need only consider the good and the positive, we are simply closing our eyes to obvious facts. To merely state that evil is negative and therefore cannot affect us is to obviously fail to recognize the circumstances that exist about us. As we have already considered, there are natural and moral evils in the world. That they are of a negative character and are secondary in importance to the positive manifestations does not to any extent modify the fact of their existence. The individual who suffers pain is face to face with the most realistic conception of the problem of evil. To tell that individual merely that evil is negative is in no way going to lessen the pain, or make him feel that evil is something that is only an illusion, when his senses constantly inform him of the reality, insofar as he is aware of the condition.

In a larger sense we must not forget that the classification of good and evil into a positive and negative manifestation is one purely based upon human understanding and ability to perceive. If we could see the whole picture of universal meaning, we would find error in our judgment. Nevertheless, it is a workable plan for man to realize that what we classify as positive and negative can be so conceived that the positive can, in the end, overcome the negative.

At one point in one of our rituals, the statement is made that "Darkness is the absence of light." The truth of this statement is obvious to us. If we are in a brightly illuminated room and every opening of that room leads to another room of absolute darkness, we well know that if we should open the door of the lighted room the light will shine out into the darkness. Under no circumstances could we conceive of the opposite; that is, the darkness coming into the room and replacing part of the light. This is an illustration of the positive and negative status of light and darkness. It makes clear the fact that light can overcome darkness, that while darkness is real to our senses, and it would be false to deny its existence, we can nevertheless in some manner produce light which will counteract it. So, while evil is classified as negative and while we cannot deny its effect upon us, we can realize that good, being its opposite, can replace it. The experience which we gain through the process of trying to attempt the replacement of good by the condition of evil will better fit us, on the whole, to the problems of the universe, and more closely to the problems of our own individual lives and environment.—A.

Mental Fitness

Modern communication and transportation has frequently been pointed out as a means of the world growing smaller, of making each individual more aware of the problems of other human beings. Consequently, with a lessening of the isolation of individuals we are becoming more aware of their problems; and possibly now in a world approaching a new period of adjustment, we are faced more frequently with those who seem to be lacking in all the abilities to produce a satisfactory adjustment to their environment. Many men will be returning to society not only

with physical difficulties to adjust, but with mental problems that will make their adjustment to society considerable of a problem.

With these factors observed, the question re-occurs time and time again regarding the method by which we can become better fitted mentally to the problems of everyday living. Someone has asked, "How can we control our moods and dejection in the face of failure and problems?" While it is completely normal for every individual to be emotionally affected by both problems and success, it is acknowledged that the best of mental fitness and mental health is maintained by those who are able to control these conditions. Any force under control is useful. It is when we permit a force to get out of control that there is possibility of lack of adjustment or danger from the force itself.

The treatment of mental illness has advanced a great deal in the lifetimes of most of us. At one time mental disease or ill-adjustment was considered in an entirely different category than physical illness. More and more, however, we are considering the human organism as a whole, and realize that when that organism is not in perfect harmony, when a lack of health exists, the mind as well as the body must be taken into consideration.

Mental hygiene is the science of developing proper social relationships. The individual afflicted with any kind of a mental illness is usually an extreme individualist. He lives in accordance with his own reactions to environment, while the so-called normal individual must constantly adjust himself to the demands of social intercourse. This applies not only to the individual classified as mentally ill—it applies to all of us. We cannot always give vent to our true feelings. The child learns early in life that certain emotions must be kept under control, that to give them free rein is not going to accomplish the true satisfaction hoped for, but in reality is going to create problems in the very adjustment that is sought. There are times when we would like to make evident our feeling, particularly when we are irritated, but there is a realization through reason and experience that to do so may seriously thwart our chances of accomplishing what we wish to do.

Moodiness and dejection are the common results of failure. The failure may be simple or directly related to the most important

affairs of our lives. The individual who allows dejection and moodiness to take over his thinking is simply bringing himself more and more within his own nature and shutting out the hope of finding paths for solution to his own problems. The individual who is easily dejected, who becomes moody when things go wrong, is creating a condition within himself that in many respects can be compared to a foreign growth within the physical body. Just as the unhealthy growth of tissues and cells within the body gives rise to a malignant condition in many cases, so does the dwelling upon and constant thinking about our possible failures and problems bring about a mental growth which is not conducive to mental health, and which will, if allowed to develop, take over the entire structure of our reason and thinking.

Emotional stability is the ability upon the part of the human being to subordinate his feelings to the circumstances about him. If an individual tries to do his work well, tries to maintain his social and personal relationships to the best of his knowledge and then fails in that, if he does not secure the recognition he expects for his work or the understanding he hopes for from among his closest associates or members of his family, his reaction is frequently that of discouragement and failure. The individual who is emotionally unstable may begin to dwell upon these failures, on this lack of recognition and understanding, until his whole thinking is merely going about in circles; and this leads to the development of self-pity. In the extreme case, this is the first step toward mental ill-health. We must remember that none of us can always be successful in every venture, nor can our actions always be understood by those about us. The self-analysis that is more important than the morbid dwelling upon our problems is to determine honestly whether or not we are doing the best we can. If the individual has a job to do and puts everything into it in an honest attempt to accomplish it well and then receives no recognition, he must be able to develop the attitude that he gave the best he could, and if it was not successful or recognized, there was nothing else he could do.

The important question that must be put to ourselves—because we alone are the only ones who can answer it—is "Did we really do our best?" The individual who broods

over failure where no effort was made is deceiving no one but himself. This effect on the individual concerned is frequently overlooked, while in fact it is one of the most important considerations in the maintenance of a good and healthy outlook. To become dejected over failure, when one has done his best, is inexcusable except where it serves as an incentive to do better. But failure based merely upon hope of success and upon lack of conscious attempt to do one's best, is useless and merely the result of an individual idly daydreaming that success can come without effort.

As in the case of many so-called opposites, the borderline between the normal and the abnormal is not clearly defined. Each individual has his own peculiarities. We each have our own irritating habits or methods. If someone with whom you associate irritates you, stop and ask honestly how many things do you do that irritate him? In other words, in a complex social structure, such as that in which we live, our personalities and emotions are not our private property as they would be if we were hermits or if we were living detached from all other human association. Our feelings affect the lives of those who are in close relationship to us; and if we are to maintain a so-called normal status, then we must recognize this relationship and know that all adjustments which we must make are of compromise—not compromise of our convictions and the ideals which we hold as a philosophy of life, but compromise in working with other individuals who are also faced with problems or worry, discouragement, and adjustment, just as we are.

Some people point out that the influence and stress of modern civilization is the cause of more and more mental ill-health. Whether or not that is true cannot be satisfactorily proven, as we would not have records for more than a comparatively few years of the relationship of normality and abnormality in the world—that is, the relationship in terms of population. We do know that the more complex the social structure the more we are called upon to make adjustments with other social beings such as ourselves. If we are intelligent enough to warrant the benefits of the modern social structure, then we must develop a strength to meet the problems as well as the benefits which this society places upon us.

In the broadest sense, we might interpret the world crisis of today as existing because of the failure of mankind to accept the problems as well as the benefits of civilization. In other words, it is a most difficult period of adjustment, an adjustment which is forced upon us in compensation for our desire to accept the benefits that civilization has brought to us, without wishing to also accept the responsibility. As individuals considered in this social relationship, the final analysis of our own abilities must be based upon honest appraisal and recognition of our aptitudes and our limitations. It is ridiculous for a man to try to accomplish the impossible, but it is not ridiculous for a man to strive for an ideal greater than the immediate scope of his vision.

Attaining a goal does not always bring the highest degree of satisfaction. No doubt everyone has had the experience of a "let-down" or somewhat of a disappointment when he has finally accomplished the thing toward which he has been working. Therefore, it is entirely within the realm of reason that man aim higher than he can reach, and that each step of accomplishment be more of a joy and of a satisfaction than the attaining of a lesser end or aim.

From our viewpoint, as Rosicrucians, we are trying to develop a true individuality that will include the characteristics of this reincarnation. We are trying to make that individuality an addition to the totality of our soul consciousness, so that it will have accomplished in this incarnation some of the benefits which can be carried on into a better and greater life. To do this we must face both the problems and success of our lives, but not build our entire hopes upon the accomplishments that can be limited to one lifetime. In doing this we are studying and experiencing that which we hope will contribute to this over-all picture; but with the growth of our scope of knowledge and understanding we, in turn, are affecting other members of society also, and owe an obligation to those who may have more difficulties than we. Now, and in the future, many calls will be made upon us to assist those whose adjustments to life and its conditions are in a far more difficult status than our own. We will find those broken physically and mentally, through no choice of their own, who will need understanding and help

to again become constructive citizens of our country and of a social commonwealth.

Are we willing to assume the responsibility of assisting these individuals, or is the desire for knowledge and understanding purely selfish? If we will not assume this responsibility we are falling short of the experience which we ourselves must gain. There is no use bemoaning the evidences of evil in the world, but there is every reason to recognize that we are here to learn something from them. Whether our lot be to extend a helping hand to those less fortunate than ourselves, or the taking of an important or active part in the complex social activities of humanity as a whole, these steps would be building toward an eventual peace and understanding between mankind. To help one's neighbor may be our lot in life and may be the key to the better understanding of our own Karmic status.—A.

Marriage and Spiritual Development

A question asked by a soror, of this FORUM is: "Do you consider marriage incompatible with spiritual development?"

This question is one that has plagued theologians and ecclesiasts for centuries. In fact, almost since its inception, Christianity has had one or another of its sects adopt *celibacy*—the abstinence from marriage—by its clergy. Resorting to hermeneutics, or the science of interpretation of the Scriptures, the theologians have tried to justify this kind of *asceticism*. It was the influence of so-called pagan religions, those which far antedated Christianity, which made itself felt in the doctrine of celibacy. In other words, insofar as Christianity is concerned, celibacy is a syncretic conception—a borrowed one. For example, the monastic system of Buddhism is far older than Christianity. Further, in the early days of Rome, the State tried to force continued celibacy upon its *vestal virgins*. Notwithstanding the great honors and rewards which were showered upon these girls, they ultimately retired from their sacred duties and returned to profane life and married. There was a constant requirement for more and more to serve in such holy places, who would keep the vows of abstinence from marriage.

The first Christian Church Council which definitely forbade marriage by the clergy was the Spanish Synod of Elvira, A. D. 305.

In 1051-1089, Pope Leo II and Urban II, at the Councils of Rome and Amalfi, adjudged women who married priests or the clergy to be no better than actual slaves and to be treated as such. Frequently the wives of the clergy were scourged as having defiled the priests' sacred status by marriage. The Greek Catholic Church, which had its see at Constantinople, was far more liberal in this matter. They permitted students attending theological seminaries to resign before being ordained, and then they might marry. Subsequently, they could return to the seminary, complete their studies, become ordained, and yet retain their wives.

The belief that celibacy—the abstinence from marriage—is necessary where one is to devote himself to spiritual activity is a false notion. A good example of such immature reason is to be found in the tenets of Manichaeanism, which incidentally greatly influenced the views of the early Christian church on this subject. Manichaeanism consists of the philosophical ideas of one, *Manes*, a student of Zoroastrianism and Christianity. One Manichaean tenet is the diabolical origin of all matter, including the human body. This is distinctly an influence of Zoroastrianism. In other words, the soul is from God, the source of all *Light*. The body is a prison. It is corrupt, and a place of darkness in which the soul is held as a prisoner. The body is held to be evil, limited, weak, deceptive, consisting of all of the contraries that compose good. This conception parallels the views of the Orphic philosophy, and is also to be found in the Platonic doctrines. Consequently, man's two natures were held to be in continual conflict—the body with its desires and passions, and the soul with its inspirations and ideals. What we consider as the normal human desires, essential for physical and biological existence and development, were, according to these conceptions, held to be nothing else but *temptations*. The Stoics too, held the emotions and desires to be "weaknesses of the flesh." "I am seeking," says Seneca, "to find what is good for a man, not for his belly. Why cattle and whales have larger ones than he."

The normal desires, then, were just temptations put in the soul's way by a satanic or diabolical power or intelligence. One who served God could, therefore, not serve the body. To show his inclination to and his

acceptance of spiritual matters and precepts, a man must negate the evil; namely, the somatic urges of his body. It was to be expected that the layman who was striving to attain spiritual ascendancy would often submit (as an indication of his weakness) to the temptations of the body. It was to be expected that he would find sexual satisfaction in marriage. The clergy, on the other hand, or those who had a sacerdotal calling, must prove their worthiness by transcending "weaknesses" of the body. They must show their worthiness, not by just relegating their desires to the lower order of their nature, but by completely suppressing them, as, for example, the desire for marriage.

The *fallacy* of this whole reasoning must be quite apparent. The premise upon which it rests is that the body is fundamentally evil and certain normal desires of the body are therefore temptations. The enlightened mind realizes that every desire of the body that is *normal* is God-inspired. It is a law inherent in matter. It follows from the necessity of living matter. Matter is an expression of God. Therefore no evil can possibly exist in the normal satisfaction of somatic desires. Only the perversion or misuse of them can be morally considered a sin or wrong conduct. If man limits himself to expression through only one channel of his nature, he is then evil. The *ascetic*, who with the best intentions in the world, denies his somatic body its normal functions, and who practices celibacy is by his acts damning Divine laws. He is, whether he realizes it or not, far more evil, from a truly Cosmic and moral point of view, than the healthy, normal-minded person who lives a natural life. You cannot separate a light from its lamp. You cannot live a spiritual life apart from your body. A morally circumspect and normal married life offers no obstacles to spiritual awakening.

Today we have many systems of asceticism, advocated by persons who represent themselves to be spiritual leaders. Some of these persons are subnormal or abnormal; that is, from a psychological point of view they are lacking. They may be glandular freaks. They may be psychopathic cases. They are quite aware, some of them, that they are different from other men. They cannot find happiness and enjoyment in normal living because of their deficiency. Therefore, they try to escape from life. They try to create

an artificial state in which they find satisfaction or enjoyment, and then they hold that up, expound it as the ideal. And since they are physically deficient and cannot enjoy normal physical relations, they decry those who can, and declare such a way to be false, corrupt and evil. They advocate that the only spiritual way is to devote oneself entirely to the higher life, denying the material or physical.

There is no denying the fact that such persons delude their followers. I have known of individuals of this type who have actually broken up homes. Women who were desirous of spiritual awakening, of attaining Cosmic Consciousness, were told by such individuals that they must leave their husbands or must cease having normal relations with them. This caused great sorrow and misfortune. Some of these women nearly lost their minds because they truly loved their husbands, and yet they did not want to feel that their souls were being damned because they did; so they tried to stamp out their love for their husbands, and the psychological results must be apparent. Everything that is natural is of nature, and nature is of God. Remember that and you will have no difficulty in determining whether something is or is not compatible with spiritual ends.—X.

Using the Word

A frater in Whittier, California, now asks the FORUM this question: "I would like to ask the practical use of the word or words which come to us psychically or Cosmically from time to time. If they sometimes relate to people or places, how may one corroborate them historically? Take the words that have come to me, that is, *Nethrida Rosityl*. In the little spare time I had at the library, I have not been able to find any reference to them. The words could be a person's name or they could be something else. They might even have some hieratic meaning to which I do not have the key. I would appreciate more enlightenment."

This subject is well covered and explained in the monographs. However, we shall endeavor to throw more light upon it on this occasion. Man is a composite being; he is emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual. All those terms refer to the different aspects and attributes of that which is man.

Each one of man's physical senses has its particular dualities. Light is one of the qualities of sight, and fragrance is one of the dualities of the olfactory sense. The whole of man's being is harmoniously united. It is like a musical instrument that has been tuned to a certain note and is in resonance with that note. Whenever that note is played, the entire instrument responds to it. However, these fundamentals in each individual are slightly different. There is, for example, a preferred fragrance or scent to which each of us responds more than to others. There is also a preferred color to which we each react.

The word that comes to us Cosmically at times—that is, flashes into our consciousness—when it is intoned or spoken produces a vibratory effect on our psychic centers. The vibrations of that note represent, as a harmonic, the specific vibrations of our being. We respond to it. It tunes all our faculties and attributes, as a musician tunes the strings of his violin, so that they are in their proper relation to each other. To merely utter *the word* gives us power. We sense an exhilaration. Our minds become clear and we feel physically strong. Our spirits are raised.

The exact meaning of the word is inconsequential. Sometimes it may have an actual meaning; that is, it is in our own language and we can understand it. There is a corresponding idea for it. It may be such a word as "rose"; it may be "flower"; it may be "mountain" or "sun." Then, again, the word may be a strange combination of unintelligible syllables, which, when pronounced by us, sends a wave of vibrations throughout the whole body, usually centering, finally, in the solar plexus and then dying away. When the word is not comprehensible to us, we should not be disturbed, because it is not the meaning of the word that is important, but the effect it has. It is not merely sufficient to say the word in our minds, we must actually speak it vocally. Usually, when we first Cosmically experience it, it is both visual and auditory. We see it emblazoned on the screen of our consciousness in such a way that we never forget its spelling. Simultaneously, we hear within our inner or psychic consciousness its pronunciation. With this pronunciation the reverberation and power of the word is felt throughout our whole being. Consequently, there is never any doubt

or confusion as to whether one has received the word. If it doesn't produce the effects I have mentioned, it is not the word.

How and why does the word come about? It means that we have reached a certain unity in our personal development, that we are beginning to awaken our psychic faculties and so stimulate the psychic centers that all the parts of our being, which are dependent upon those psychic centers, are being co-ordinated, working in unity. This harmony of our being produces that word, that effect. I would actually say that the harmony, when we become conscious of it, clothes itself in an idea and syllables, as a word. Let me give you an analogy. Suppose we were really a stringed instrument and all the parts of our being, the different parts of our nature, were like separate strings. Most of the time our being is out of tune. Some of the strings are not properly related to the others. Then, we set about to correct this condition through study and through *mystical exercises*. Finally, they are all brought into the proper relation with each other so that, like the strings of a violin, when all plucked together at one time by a skilled musician, they produce one single resonant chord. That sound, as we experience it, may produce various effects. We may sense, psychically, a corresponding color. Perhaps we experience a particular scent, or a sound which may appear as a word to us. Therefore, the word is really a form, fashioned by the mind, for a vibratory condition which we have attained psychically. Consequently, knowing that the word represents the acme of our psychic harmony or else it would not have come about, the real purpose and practical value of that word is to use it whenever we feel inharmonious, when we are depressed emotionally, feel ill, or when we have some crisis to meet and need to draw on our complete powers of body and mind. We should repeat this word softly to ourselves two or three times, and we will feel the results.

Of course, the word should only be used at such times as I have mentioned above. Otherwise, it is not beneficial. Again I repeat, do not concern yourself as to whether the word makes sense from an etymological point of view. That is unimportant. Very frequently there are two words which produce this effect, though not when uttered separately. They must be used in conjunc-

tion with each other and there must be no substitution of words. By that I mean that a word does not come to us Cosmically for this purpose today; that six months from now, we receive another word; and then later, perhaps, the original word comes back. That is not the way it occurs.

One never knows when he is going to receive the word. We tell about it at a certain point in the monographs because, at that particular place, the principles relating to it are best explained. But, just because we put the explanation in a particular monograph and in a particular degree, it doesn't mean that the development and actual experience of the word will come to the individual at that time. Some persons have experienced the word before becoming members of the Order. They knew that a certain word, when they said it to themselves, fascinated them, made them feel peaceful and quiet, or gave them inner strength, but they did not know why. When they reach the point in the studies where this is explained, they understand. There are others who understand about the word from our explanations, but they do not have any experience with it until several years later perhaps. This doesn't mean that they are less psychic. There are a number of factors entering into the situation, such as, personal development, personal life, and other conditions. The combination of the various factors is slightly different with everyone, just as everyone's fingerprint is slightly different.

—X.

Imbecility and Karma

Another interesting question now comes to the attention of this FORUM. It is: "In case of imbecility, is the soul-personality suppressed during the present incarnation, or is there a self-conscious development that is not objectively observable? Is the imbecile working out his karmic debt as a result of errors committed in previous incarnations?"

This question might be answered very simply by saying that where there is no *self-realization*, there is no personal karma. Without going deeply again into the subject of karma or the law of moral or Cosmic compensation, let us remind all that karma is not just adverse. Unfortunately, many persons are inclined to try and explain the principles of karma just by the adversities experienced in life. That which an indi-

vidual experiences as great success, happiness, or so-called *good fortune* may likewise be the result of karma. Karma being a manifestation of the laws of causality, namely, cause and effect, there are then causes of beneficial karma. Karma being moral causes and effects—that is, concerned with principle as well as results—it seeks to *instruct* those whom it affects. To make this plain, a purely mechanistic series of causes would be without any intent. The law of gravity, for example, once invoked, seeks to draw the mass of the object, which has been thrown or propelled into the air, back to the earth, regardless of whether anyone becomes conscious of the falling object or not. The law of gravity is strictly an *impersonal* law of nature. Conversely, the laws of karma cannot be. If they were, there would be nothing gained by karma. We are neither punished, nor are we rewarded by karma. We are but *experiencing* an effect which we have brought about. Through karma we learn what kindness, tolerance, and humanitarianism may bring forth. Likewise, through karma we learn what hatred, envy, avarice, and other Cosmically wrong conduct may manifest. These results which we experience are examples, instructions, pointing the way to be followed or to be avoided.

It must be apparent, then, if one is *not* fully conscious, for example, of suffering, or how much his living deviates from the normal, he has gained nothing by the circumstances. If I carelessly rent a house in which to reside and which contains great quantities of dangerous explosives in its basement, and I do not discover this, I have learned nothing by the circumstances. I would be just as happy in my ignorance as if I had first carefully searched the house and found it free of any such danger. To teach me a lesson of caution, it would be necessary for me to learn that the house had explosives in it. My great concern thereafter would make a lasting impression upon me.

This leads to the question of the one who was born an imbecile. He is not capable of *self-realization*. He acts like an automaton. He is not capable of the mental state of observation and reflection, and no coordination between such two states is possible. He is, therefore, unable to evaluate his unfortunate status, in comparison to that of normal human beings. In fact, he is unable to be aware that his is an unfortunate condition.

Consequently, he is not experiencing any karma. Actually, such a soul-personality might be a highly evolved one, but it is temporarily arrested while in the deformed body. It has no realization of itself. It is as though it were still on the Cosmic plane and had not yet incarnated in another body. The evolution of such a soul-personality is not altered by such an incarnation, for there is no experience had.

The state of imbecility, from a Cosmic point of view, is not to teach the imbecile, but rather to teach those who are responsible for its welfare and care. The parents or others who have the burden and experience of the care of an imbecile are the ones who are capable of fully realizing the state of affairs. Subsequently, they either learn humility, forbearance, and compassion, and consequently evolve themselves from some past false conduct, or they do not. If they do not, by such an attitude, they are but establishing future karmic causes of even more adverse effects to follow.

I have known of haughty, proud families, vain in their genealogical descent. They conceived themselves superior in their birth; then to them was born an imbecilic child. Not only did they experience paternal shock, but perhaps even more a shock to their ego. Instead of accepting the circumstances and not endeavoring to conceal them, they would sequester the child away in an institution or in their own home. Never would they discuss or reveal the fact of the child's existence. Instead of realizing, by such an experience, that all persons or mortals are subject to material and physical vicissitudes, and becoming more tolerant of other's misfortunes, they kept up their pretext of superiority. They were not learning the karmic lesson intended for them, and they were only inviting more drastic experiences in future incarnations. However, the imbecile child was not experiencing any karma, because he had no realization of the event of his own existence. I repeat, that without such realization, without the capacity of experience, there can be no karma. This does not apply to a person who gradually goes insane or who has lucid periods in which he is fully conscious of his state. It does not apply also to those who are dominated by hallucinations. Such persons are capable of self-realization, even if the experience is clouded in illusions. Theirs, then, is a personal karma.—X.



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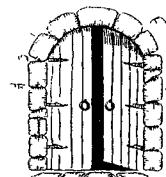
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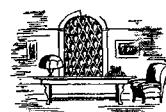
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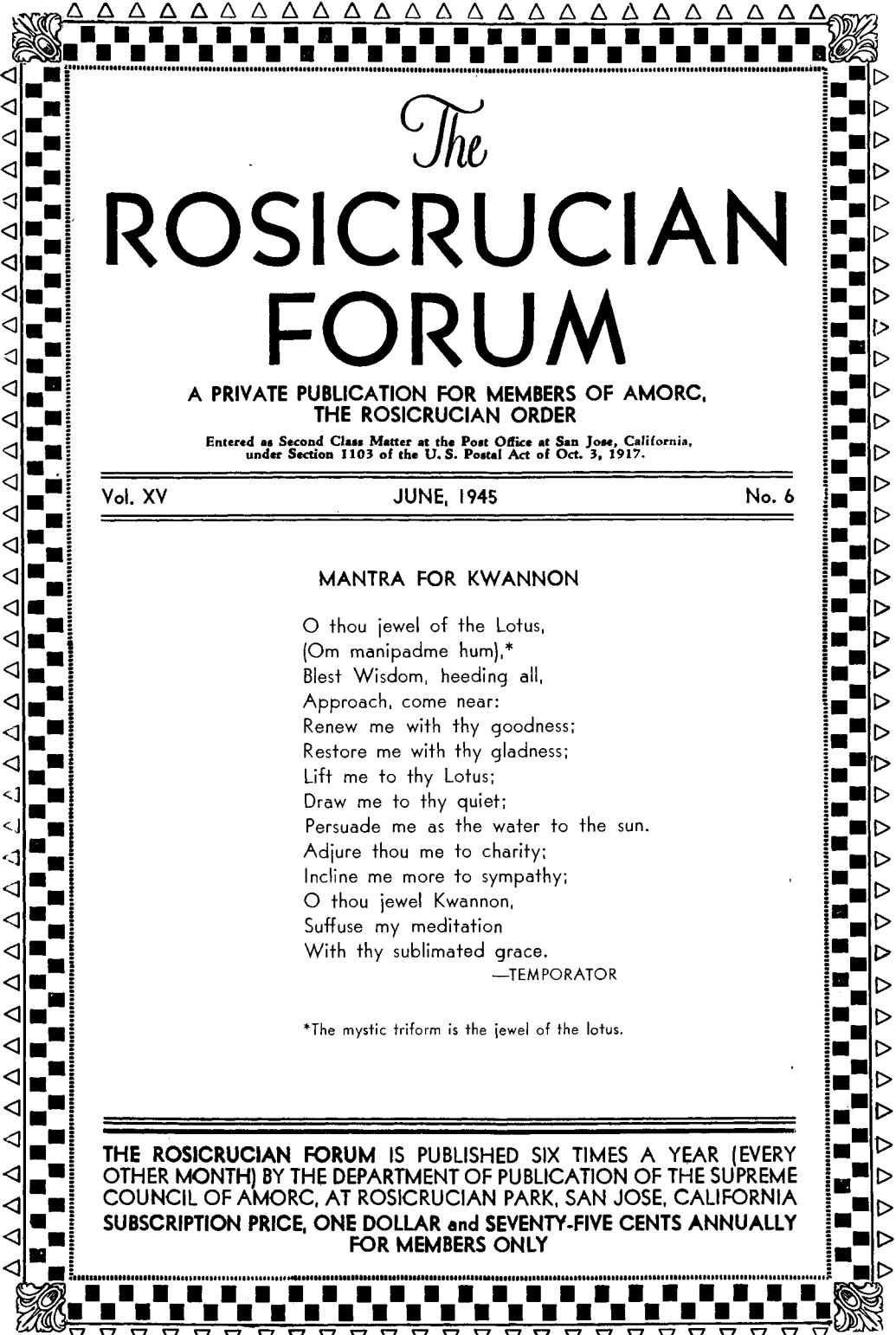
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No. 6

MANTRA FOR KWANNON

O thou jewel of the Lotus,
(Om manipadme hum),*
Blest Wisdom, heeding all,
Approach, come near:
Renew me with thy goodness;
Restore me with thy gladness;
Lift me to thy Lotus;
Draw me to thy quiet;
Persuade me as the water to the sun.
Adjure thou me to charity;
Incline me more to sympathy;
O thou jewel Kwannon,
Suffuse my meditation
With thy sublimated grace.

—TEMPORATOR

*The mystic triform is the jewel of the lotus.

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Greetings!



Dear Fratres and Sorores:

The fixation that there is "a chosen people" is implanted firmly in the minds of many. The psychological propaganda of the Nazis that the Germans by race and by heritage were a chosen people was much ridiculed in America; however, many of those who derided such Nazi propaganda were actually only disagreeing with the Nazis that they were the chosen ones. Personally they were convinced that there is a preferred or chosen people, and it is the class of which they are members.

This idea of a chosen people arises out of the psychological factor of *self-esteem*. This self-esteem, in turn, is an extension of the instinct of self-preservation. Every animal, and man as well, will without reasoning fight for the continuance of his physical being. Man has evolved much further than the other animals about him. He has a developed *self-realization*, a consciousness of self. This self is a combination of his intellectual abilities, his talents, his powers of accomplishment, and his moral conceptions. What I think, what I believe, what my ideals are, what I am able to do are as much a part of my being as are my body and its organs. Consequently, I want to preserve them. To have them submerged is a kind of amputation of part of myself. To eliminate my ideals and my opinions entirely would be a blow to my ego. I would as instinctively rebel against it as I would against being drowned. What is of our integrated self we esteem. We are proud of it. To give ourselves a kind of prominence is to give the immaterial part of our being an existence equal to our physical self.

Some persons have such talents or qualities as are not prosaic. Their prominence is apparent to everyone and they accordingly receive acclaim. Their ego or pride is properly assuaged. For everyone who receives such distinction and recognition by their fellows, there are thousands who do not. Within their breasts, however, is this same urge for the preservation of the immaterial self, to have

it recognized. Where the individual is incapable of personal distinction, he resorts to *group prominence*. He wants to be a part of something that will seem to elevate self and give it that prestige, that transendency which it cannot manifest by itself. These individuals seek out societies, groups, cliques who have honors because of something they have accomplished collectively, or because of what some few of its members have done. These persons feel that by being members of such groups or bodies, there is thus transmitted to them the necessary distinction to gratify their need for self-esteem. You have often heard them say: "I am a member of this or that group, of which President So-and-So was a past member." Again, they will say: "Some of the wealthiest or most learned men have been members of the society with which I am affiliated. Some persons even try to find this esteem, this preservation of the ego in their race, or their religion. They want to feel, to believe that their race, their creed, their social standing is the preferred, the *chosen* one. It gives their ego a sense of security and well-being.

This psychological factor is rooted deep in the nature of man, and it can and does account for many of his difficulties. It is one of the greatest provocations of *nationalism*. A nation is a group of people who arbitrarily have drawn an imaginary line about themselves. Sometimes this line was intended to keep out the views and actions of others. Sometimes the line has been interpreted as keeping within, exclusively for the group itself, its own ways and beliefs. The human is reluctant to admit that the society of which he is a part, the nation in which he finds himself is inferior or even just equal to another. He often calls it patriotism when he is extremely boastful in declaring that "what happens within his national boundaries is the *best*. Frequently this patriotism is but a self-endorsement, another example of seeking self-esteem in the nationality in which one is born. True patriotism, a loyalty to a nation, would admit the nation's weaknesses as well as its virtues. True patriotism is also

a feeling which says in effect: "I am on this team and I will play with it honestly and fairly while its objectives are the same, namely, honest and fair." Such real patriotism is entirely different from that of the one who tries to eulogize every custom, every practice within the national boundaries, just because he is a citizen of the country. Psychologically, such an attitude consists of declaring the whole of which you are a part as the best, whether it is or not, so that it may confer distinction upon yourself.

There is, then, a great tendency of peoples to make those of their nationality appear as a chosen people, that their egos may bask in the reflected light of being either American, British, Russian, French, or so on. It is, in my opinion, far better to say: "I am proud of what America does," than to say: "I am proud of being an American." This often insincere glorification of nationality to indirectly glorify the ineffectual ego of the individual is *dangerous*. It inclines many persons to assume a supercilious attitude toward peoples in other lands. There are many nationalists in the United States who actually look with pity and contempt upon those who are born or who reside elsewhere. Those born in the United States have been favored by circumstances, as history reveals. This they should realize. It is entirely wrong to think that the rest of the world need become American citizens or migrate to this country and become imbued with Americanism. The peoples born elsewhere are equal in potential happiness and personal achievement with those born inside our political fences and boundaries. They have had and will have, by virtue of complexities that have evolved through the centuries of political history, many obstacles to overcome before they can enjoy the privileges which we do. The reason they do not enjoy them now, nor have them, is not because they are an inferior or *unchosen people*. We are a comparatively young nation, a land newly pioneered. We have many advantages here, principally because two or three centuries ago peoples elsewhere could throw aside the yoke of obsolete conditions and come here to a new land, free of encumbrances, to begin again.

The proper spirit is to recognize all peoples as being equal in potential accomplishment and to recognize all lands as possible of prog-

ress if certain liberal and constructive steps are taken. The United States should be pointed out as an example of what can be for humanity. It must not be pointed out as the place where these things alone can be done. It must not be exemplified as the place where the world's chosen or *superior people* reside. All is lost for humanity if it is made to appear that only in America, or only by becoming a citizen of the United States can or does one acquire such a superior way of living. Such an attitude fosters isolationism. Actually, groups having such wrong ideas advocate a lessening of cooperation or a unity of the United States with other nations, for fear that our superior or chosen position might become contaminated by contact with other peoples. This isolationist spirit considers others inferior—and desires to keep them so. If we have advantages, it is incumbent upon us to help the rest of the world attain them, not just here, but *everywhere*.

Recently I saw a motion picture publicly exhibited in theatres, issued as propaganda by a bureau of the United States Government. It intended to extol the virtues of the Bureau of Immigration and our treatment of immigrants and refugees to the United States. The kind and considerate treatment of immigrants, as exhibited in the film, was perhaps in the main factual. The aggrandizement of America, the implication that the rest of the world was but a crude, uncultured, and even primitive region was ridiculous. It made it appear that not only were all of the finer things of life to be found in the United States, where a superior people lived, but there is no hope for these things to be had elsewhere. It would have been a far more intelligent presentation, as well as more diplomatic, to have shown refugees escaping the chaos of Europe, and coming here as *one of the many places free at the time from turmoil*. The hope that nations of Europe could again attain their rightful place among civilized, peaceful states, where peoples there could enjoy these privileges which we have here was not only overlooked, but was suppressed. It would have likewise been tactful to disclose that many other thousands of refugees from Europe have gone to our sister republics in South America, where they can enjoy the tranquility and culture of the big cities there, which generally exists in the New World. Instead, the whole emphasis of

the film was that America, and becoming an American, is the salvation of mankind.

While on the one hand a World Security Peace Conference was being held in San Francisco to unify nations, to bring about a peaceful world and a peaceful people, this film was exploiting American nationalism. The United States is a member of the family of nations. An egotistical display by a member of any family does not make for harmony within it. *We are not a chosen people.* We are a people with a more workable system—a system that is workable anywhere, with any other peoples on the face of the earth.

Fraternally,
RALPH M. LEWIS,
Imperator.

Imagination and Imaging

It is not unusual after the experiments relating to visualization presented in the early degrees that members ask the typical question, "How can I improve upon my ability to visualize?" The answer to this question lies in the complete understanding of the process of visualization and in the related subjects of imagining and imaging. It has been repeatedly stated in these pages and in suggestions from the Department of Instruction regarding visualization that we must look upon visualization as a technique—in fact, as almost an art.

A technique is usually the method of procedure by which an end is accomplished. For example, to refer to a many-times used illustration, the technique necessary for a person to become a musician is the intricate movements of the fingers in the manipulation of the musical instrument. The gaining of this technique is closely related to habit; that is, the pianist, through repeated practice of various exercises on the keyboard of a piano, gradually builds up a set of habit systems that cause his fingers to respond almost involuntarily to the written music. To anyone who has attempted to learn a process, such as playing a piano, or any other complicated instrumental accomplishment, it is well known that practice is the most essential feature in the gaining of the technique and the resultant music ability. Knowledge alone will not do it. A person could be a walking encyclopedia of music terms and yet be un-

able to put that knowledge into use so as to bring about music, unless it was accompanied by proper practice and gradual attainment of the desired technique.

We see, therefore, in the gaining of a technique, that we are attaining a step that will lead to the eventual purpose that we have in mind. The technique in itself is not necessarily the end to be achieved. The musician does not practice exercises on the piano merely for the exercising of his fingers, but in order that he may transfer that ability to the production of music. Usually we refer to processes requiring a learned technique, which is a perfection of certain habit systems, as an art. This is because the art is the product of the technique or process.

In the process of visualization we are dealing with a technique with the idea of perfecting the art of visualization—the art of being able to hold in our minds an image, a reproduced picture of the thing with which we are concerned in visualizing. Normally, we do not think in terms of images in that we are aware of the creation of images in our minds. The thinking process of the average individual when broken down into two elemental parts is comparatively simple. It is so simple that it is difficult for the average individual to analyze the process. Actually, the process consists of hardly more than fleeting pictures in the mind brought about by hopes or memories, and by a process of sub-vocal talking; that is, carrying on in our own thinking a conversation or continuity of words. Most of us would like to think of the process of thought as something greater than idle pictures and continuity of words, but this is all it is, until we determine to use the thought processes and to build up the art of thinking by giving consideration to the improvement of the process and bringing into reality the possibility of making better use of this particular attribute of our consciousness.

The Rosicrucian student is one who has decided to at least attempt a betterment or perfecting of all his abilities—among these the ability to think, and therefore, the ability to develop creative thought. Creative thought precedes accomplishment. Animals do not think creatively, at least for the most part, to the best of our knowledge of animal life. They react to environment and their limited ability of memory is closely coupled with

habitual reactions. Man, on the other hand, given the ability to reason, has the potentiality before him of always being able, by the use of his own mind and thought, to re-group past experiences, to analyze knowledge, and to anticipate the future in terms of this thought process. The fact of the matter is that few have even attempted to develop the maximum use of the thinking process, and still fewer who have attempted it have accomplished anything. Those who have mastered the use of their ability to think have usually become outstanding in their particular field. They are the pioneers in industry, science, and social relationships. They are the individuals who have done what was, prior to that time, thought to be the impossible. They have set for themselves an ideal, or purpose, and have directed their energy and thought toward its accomplishment.

Visualization is one step in the use of the unlimited powers of thought. It is based upon the principle that if we can see—literally see in our mind's eye—the thing which we set out to achieve, we are setting the stage for its actual appearance, or coming about, within our environment and outside ourselves. It is here that it is necessary for us to be able to create in the mind the picture which we wish to have become an actuality. This picture is more technically referred to as an image. The image, insofar as it is related to the mind, is the reproduction of a thing which we have actually experienced with the physical senses, such as, when we remember and picture a house, a street, a person, or anything which we have seen or experienced in objective living. On the other hand, an image can be created—that is, we can draw upon our memory, we can put together various experiences and information which we have accumulated and create an image in our minds that does not have its absolute duplication in experience. This does not mean that we can conceive or picture anything that is beyond our mentality to grasp, but the architect, for example, can, by his knowledge and experience, create in his mind a visual image of a building that does not yet exist. It can be different in design and appearance from any building ever built by man. Furthermore, it will be necessary for the architect to create such an image in his mind, before he can duplicate that image on paper in the form of drawings and

plans which will be the means of directing the constructing engineer to duplicate in stone, wood, or brick the image in the mind of the architect.

Now, it is most important in using this process and developing it that we understand the terms used, and what we practice. In other words, we must be concerned with knowledge and experience. Knowledge will include the meaning of the tools with which we are dealing. We must distinguish, first of all, between imaging and imagination. The image is a clear-cut picture; imagination refers more to the process. Imagination constructively used is invaluable. It is the factor which makes it possible for the architect, for example, to conceive a new design in building; that is, to have created in his mind the image of a building different from any that has existed before.

Not all imagination is creative. Most imagination is merely idle wishing or daydreaming. To merely permit ideas to go undirected through our minds is a process of uncontrolled imagination that leads to nothing—unless, unfortunately, it leads to disappointment. To merely hope and imagine that things can be different from what they are, or that we can be different from what we are, and doing nothing about it, is merely speculation. To make a comparison with the musician again, it is like an individual who might wish to be popular among music-loving people and in his idle moments simply, as a process of idle imagination, thought of himself as a musician, but did nothing more. Even if he could visualize himself as a musician, if nothing more than that were done, he never would become a musician. In other words, the image towards which the process of visualization is directed is the foundation or basis for growth and accomplishment, but it must be followed with creative imagination.

This creative imagination is more than idle daydreaming. It is putting together the known facts and making an effort to find out the unknown, so that the picture can be completed and the methods outlined which are physically necessary to bring about its actuality. The process of visualization sums up to the fact that effort and energy are required if it is to be effective. Not only energy or plain work is necessary, but consistency. Exercises that bring about the ability to visualize and reason constructively are something

that can only be gained by doing, as in any other technique. It must not be overlooked, however, that the energy spent in such constructive thought is very little less than the same time and energy spent by most of us in idle imagination with no future purpose in mind. Systematizing our thinking processes as well as our physical possessions is an important step in our ability to gain the art of visualization. The conscientious direction of our thinking in a manner which will make us use our thought powers constructively is primarily a matter of determination and a little will power, instead of idly doing nothing and hoping for something different or something better.—A.

The Foundation for Peace

Many letters are reaching us at the present time, asking questions concerning the end of the war and the kind of peace to follow. It is impossible to answer specifically many of these questions, and it would not be of any particular advantage, either to the organization or to the individual questioner, for the officers of the Order to write individual letters stating their own opinions on the matter. We must not forget that because of so many factors involved in the future peace of the world we are dealing with complicated consequences and effects which, even if they could be assembled and critically analyzed, would not be sufficient since they are based upon human reaction in many cases, reaction which will be more of an emotional nature than that founded upon reason.

One question, however, which can be discussed broadly is, "What are the truly fundamental factors that will bring about an established world peace?" The questioner is interested in knowing if the United Nations' Conference now in process is dealing with the fundamental issues of world peace; that is, will this conference get to the bottom of the matter and bring about conditions, regulations, and agreements that will be conducive to peace? This question only the future can answer in terms of events which will follow the conference.

There is one thing upon which, no doubt, every intelligent person will agree—that the conference now in session is a step in the right direction. We cannot expect immediate perfection in efforts toward peace from a

world torn by war, but all efforts are valuable. It is quite probable—and this is no reflection upon those who are striving among their respective countries to bring about a machinery for the maintenance of peace—that no peace conference or conference of nations will arrive at the fundamental factor that is necessary for the permanence of peace in the world, just as no community or organization has ever arrived at the fundamental factor for eliminating crime.

The desire for peace must first originate in the minds and hearts of individuals. If we are to have peace on a world-wide scale, we must first have peace upon a small scale. If among a few people there exists friction, highly divergent differences of opinion and uncontrolled emotions resulting from their differences, we can readily see that there will be no thorough desire upon their part to dismiss differences and live together in peace based upon justice.

It is a part of the animal nature to respond pugnaciously to those things which interfere with what might be the particular desire, intent, or purpose of the individual. Consequently, animals will fight over food, and so human beings will fight with each other over any thwarted desire. However, mankind is different from the animal world in that he is given reason. When two individuals meet to examine their differences of opinion and to express their own individual desires, it is expected by civilized society and by the highest ideals of social living, that these two individuals will not let their emotions get out of control and end their relationship in an out-and-out fight, but will instead bring into use the highest achievement of the objective mind of man; that is, reason, and by reason be willing to make a compromise. While differences of opinion may exist at the conclusion of the compromise, the matter will, at least, have been settled intelligently and will not have been based entirely upon feeling. Therefore, if peace is to exist in the world it must begin to exist more and more in the minds of men, and among men in their individual dealings and relationships with each other.

The Rosicrucian philosophy teaches the existence of the microcosm and macrocosm—that is, that the whole is made up of its parts and that the smallest cell must function in harmony if the entire universe is to be har-

monious, and so it is with individuals and with nations. If each country and the combined countries of the world are going to actually reach a foundation for the accomplishment of peace, it must be based upon the individual desire of each person making up the group for peace—to wish for it in their own individual relations with each other and have that desire even exceed the desire for individual acquisition or domination.

Some might say that mankind has not yet reached such a state of development as to permit the existence of reason to dominate his thinking of peace within himself. In other words, we know if we face the facts that man is fundamentally selfish in many respects. It has been common in the history of civilization for men in political speeches, in their religious practices, particularly upon their day of worship, to uphold the highest ideals of which their race and society was capable. No doubt, we have each had the experience of having the misfortune of being acquainted with an individual who on Sunday would be the loudest in his statements of faithfulness to his God and fellow men, and who on Monday would cheat his neighbor, his customer, or ruthlessly foreclose a mortgage, or perform a dozen acts so at variance with the ideas expressed in connection with his religion that it would seem impossible that the individual could be the same person in both cases.

Incidentally, the religion and the philosophy of modern times have done little to change this viewpoint upon the part of many men and women. Religion is an institution. It has become something that can be practiced through a form or a process, but is actually completely disassociated with the daily life of the individual for the rest of the week. The individual, if faced with this fact, would not admit that he did not practice his religion or that he had intentions of violating it, but in actual day by day living his primary purpose is to fulfill his own desires regardless of their conflict with any ideals to which he might subscribe through a religious process.

This is not meant as a condemnation of religion or of any idealistic philosophy of life. The leaders of the great churches of the modern world have tried to point out that religion, if it is to be a potential force in the

world, must be one that is lived and not merely talked. The modern world, however, has so forced upon man the ideas of competition and acquisition that they have become paramount issues in the planning and leading of daily lives. It is the true understanding of man himself that is the key to peace and to an ideal world. Man will have to be taught that there is more value in getting along with other human beings and keeping himself right with his Creator than there is in trying to modify and adjust his environment to the ends which serve his own purposes.

All idealistic trends of thinking on the part of man will contribute to this, but in mysticism a true realization of man's relationship to God is the final solution—a concept realized by man that the very source of his life and being, the very things which are most essential to him and upon which he must depend for all that is of real value, can come through a mystical interpretation and a direct knowledge of God. If peace is to be paramount in the world, and we are to select any one fundamental as the foundation for lasting and true peace, it will be answered in the mystical concept, the understanding by man, gained through knowledge and experience, that he has a direct contact with God and that he can cultivate and use this contact for his own happiness as well as that of others.—A

The "Child of the Sun"

Pharaoh Amenhotep IV might well be styled the king who sacrificed an empire to create an eternal moral and spiritual influence upon the minds of men. The material accomplishments of the monumental XVIII Dynasty of Egypt were literally sacrificed upon the altar of young Amenhotep's "unprecedented greatness in the world of ideas." What he lacked in administrative aggressiveness and the inclination to personally ride at the head of his legions to put down revolt, he displayed in a "strong and fearless idealism," in revolutionary fields of endeavor.

Like all of those since his time, who have broken with obsolete traditions, he was a radical. The elements of his radicalism, which made him a target for intrigue, have subsequently been venerated and emulated as the highest achievements of a civilized

people. More than any Pharaoh before him, he recognized the equality of women with men. The young king, who had a most tender love for his mother, Queen Tiy, and his beautiful Asiatic wife, Nefertiti, permitted the two talented women to share prominently with him in government. This example encouraged a general recognition of the equality of women with men, among those of the strata of society beneath him. The sharing of the responsibilities and the direction of domestic life of the nobles and their wives are pictured in beautiful murals upon the walls of their tombs.

Frequently historians have referred to Amenhotep IV as the "first great personality in history," for he was a man who stood upon his own accomplishments and was not primarily a product of his times. No historian has ever attempted to rob Amenhotep IV of the pristine nature of his most inspiring and reverent writings, by attributing them to any other source. However, I should like to point out that the sensitivity and esthetic nature of the young Pharaoh brought him in contact with ideas which cultivated the germs of his subsequent great concepts.

Amenhotep IV (Ikhnaton) became fascinated at an early age with the religio-philosophy of Eye, a priest and the husband of a childhood nurse. The Mystery School of Memphis, with which Eye was most conversant, had taught in centuries past that Ptah was the artifice-god. He influenced and inspired artisans and craftsmen in their works of genius. He symbolized the creative talents of man. Now, Ptah gradually had expanded to become the *Great Architect of the Universe*. More striking, Ptah became not an image or one of the number of personal gods of Egyptian polytheism, but a *creative, Divine Mind*. Eye could have quoted to his young king, the following lines from a poem by a Memphite priest, which was then current:

"It (the mind) is the one that brought forth every successful issue.
It is the tongue which repeats the thought of the mind;
It (the mind) was the fashioner of the gods—
At a time when every Divine word
Came into existence by the thought of the mind;
And the command of the tongue."

Here was the concept of a God as a Universal Intelligence, and his *spoken word* was his efficacy. Thutmose III states on his tombstone that he owed his success to the guidance of "his heart," to which he listened confidently. He further said: "Lo, it is an oracle of the God, which is in everybody."

The sensitive and philosophically minded young king could not have been unaware of such tremendous moral utterances, when he wrote his famous Psalms. In proclaiming his monotheism, a belief in a sole god, he crystallized the evolving philosophy of the Mystery Schools, of which there is every indication he was a student-initiate. To him, Aten was a *symbol* of a single intelligence behind and above all sentient or worldly things, even beyond all of the local gods, whose images he sought to destroy. The force by which this intelligence executed its designs, the things of the world, was the *spoken word*. This, then, was an early pronouncement of the subsequent *Logos*. The dependence of all things upon this Universal Intelligence is beautifully expressed in the very words of Ikhnaton:

"How manifold are all of thy works!
They are hidden from before us,
O, thou sole God, whose powers no
Other possessth."

Ikhnaton saw in this Universal Mind, not a vainglorious, conquering God, but a benevolent, compassionate Father of all. This God was a source of power and of truth. Those who sought the manifestations of this God, to inquire into the greatness of nature, were said by him to be "living on truth."

Amenhotep IV (Ikhnaton) attracted to himself and his God, after his accession, the most idealistic and artistic personages from throughout his Empire. He encouraged them to self-expression in the city of Akhetaten (horizon of Aten), which he built as a monument to his mission of enlightenment. The influence of that city and the schools which sprang from it have left their impression upon subsequent civilizations. The Rosicrucian Order, AMORC (a philosophical fraternity), has devoted itself to searching out the "rays of Aten," or truths that have reflected throughout the centuries. It is with pleasure, therefore, that we heartily endorse the admirable book, *Child of the Sun*, by Margaret Dulles Edwards. It presents the

life of Amenhotep IV, or Ikhnaton, in story or narrative form *for children*.

This book is well-illustrated, well-bound; and as it is written for children, it is in very simple language. It will make a very lasting impression on them. It is nonsectarian and in no way will influence their religious beliefs. It is historically accurate. It can be obtained from the *Rosicrucian Supply Bureau, San Jose, California*, for the nominal sum of \$1.75. We heartily recommend this book for children of the Junior Order of Torch Bearers, for the children of Rosicrucian parents, and, in fact, for *any child* interested in the romance of the beginnings of great things.—X

Experiencing God

Again a frater addresses our FORUM. He says: "Describe for us in detail the *experiencing of God*. How can we be sure that we are in contact with God? What are the qualities of that experience?"

What a tremendous task to assign to any human! If I were to describe my sacrosanct experiences, those that I conceived to be of God, in all probability many others could not accept them. God is as much an *ideal* to the human consciousness as He is a reality. The very nature of God is a disputatious subject. There are religions and philosophies which ascribe to Him certain determinate qualities. There are also sects and systems of thought that consider God inexplicable and ineffable. Obviously God, to be, must have a definite reality, but he also may exist in as many ideals in the human consciousness as there are humans. Each individual will experience the reality of God in the light of his ideal. Agreement on the content of the experience of God must then, of necessity be not possible.

Let me use an analogy. We shall assume that a tree has a definite actuality, as we ordinarily see it. In front of that tree stand three men. Each gazes upon it. They all concur that it is a tree and that it exists. Ask each of the three how they interpret their experiences of the tree. In other words, what does the experience of the tree mean to them? It is quite within the bounds of probability that one will relate to me that the tree has a potentiality of so many board feet of lumber when it is milled. From it can come

furniture for a five-room home. The second man might reply that the tree keeps the hot sun from burning the delicate tendrils of growing things beneath it. Also, by its roots, it prevents an erosion of the soil after heavy rains. To him, therefore, the tree is a protective element of nature. The third man might say: "I experience in the tree a majestic symbol of the laws of growth and development. To me the tree is a thing of beauty and a monument to Divine creation, an inspiration to man."

From this we can see that each man would find satisfaction in experiencing the tree in accordance with his understanding and what he could comprehend as its relation to himself. According to this conception, whatever a man experiences as God or what approaches his ideal of God, and if he loves it, he is then *loving God*. From this reasoning, it might appear that man could be loving a diversity of things, and yet be said to be loving God. But does not diversity exist in the *unity* of God? God is not one thing; that is, He has no single quality—to conceive that God has, is to assign certain limitations to Him. It amounts to saying that God is this, but that He is nothing else. From whence came all of the multiplicity of things which man experiences? Is it not from the nature of God? God could not have created them from some other source, or it becomes necessary for us to explain the origin of that source. If God is the sole creator of the universe and all that is in it, then all things are of God's nature. God being all things which exist, all that is both substance and thought, it is beyond the finite capabilities of man to experience the entirety of God, or the sum of all of his expressions. At best, we can become conscious of but extremely few of such manifestations. However, if any single thing within our consciousness has the sacred and sublime validity of God to us—that is, seems to participate in the nature of God—then we are experiencing the whole of Him. By such means we are put contiguous with all things of the Divine.

For analogy, I stand upon the ground, gazing up at a great oak tree. I am profoundly impressed by its majesty. What I see suggests its unity, its symmetry, its strength and beauty. Yet what I see is never the entire tree, for I cannot see each little twig, each separate leaf, with its variegated coloring and its slightly different shape. I cannot

be conscious of every variation of the texture of the bark covering every limb of the great tree. In fact, no matter how I move about it, or what position I take in relation to it, never do I see the whole tree at one time. However, I do perceive enough of it to appreciate what the great tree must be like in its wholeness; enough of it do I perceive for my mind to perfect an ideal of it. I am capable, then, of loving the tree as fully as if there were never any gaps in its form, to my senses. Thus, what symbolizes the nature of God to me, what possesses all of those qualities of the omnipotent and omnific to me and which transcends any other subjective or emotional experience of which I am capable, is God to me.

It matters not if such an experience is engendered within man by a stone image, the sun, or the conception of an intangible Supreme Mind as the Divine principle. It is not that in which man immures his conception of God that matters, but what the ideal of God causes to occur within man. A man who conceives God as a deity of superhuman form, capable of envy, jealousy, hatred, and retribution confers upon Him all of the meanness and weakness of human character. He is not truly experiencing God. His conception is that of a more powerful entity than man which he fears and respects because of his fear. It is merely an attempt to reconcile an imagined cause to the inexplicable phenomenon which he experiences. Such a God as an ideal does not correspond to the most noble and spiritual qualities of which man's moral sense is capable. It is not a God which inspires the objective man to transcend his way of living and to discipline his passions and to emulate an ideal by which he will perfect his character and his personality.

Many a primitive being who falls upon his knees and looks at the sun with reverence and with the emotion of love pouring from his squinting eyes, is experiencing God far more than one who sits in the splendor of a great cathedral, with an ideal which is lacking in the true motivating force of God. To the primitive, as he gazes upon the sun, he sees in that physical manifestation all of the great joy and blessings which he has experienced by virtue of it. He is filled with a sense of devotion for the warmth, light, and courage which the sun has imbued in

him. He feels his dependence upon this power and he senses a consideration of his well-being by it. He is, in turn, filled with a great desire to show kindness and compassion to others, in consideration for the goodness of living which he is enjoying from what he conceives as God. In the mirror of his consciousness there is reflected the error of his own ways as he conceives them, in comparison to the greatness of his ideal, the sun, the God. It matters not that the sun is not a God, or the moon, or any one thing or principle which the mind of man can conceive. It is only that there is something which can compel man to exorcise the malevolent elements of his own lesser nature. Most certainly, that which would more logically appeal, by a process of ratiocination, as the nature of God, but which would not exalt man's consciousness, would not be an experience of God.

Perhaps Spinoza, reputed to have been affiliated with the Rosicrucian Order and renowned as a mystical philosopher, has done more than anyone else to strip God of his determinate qualities—and left him to man as but an *experience*. He said that all things are of God. Everything is the outcome of the unity of the Divine nature. Therefore, nothing merits pity, contempt, or hatred by man. It is incumbent upon man to understand all of these things, and consider them as a part of the *whole* of God. When we understand this, conflict ends, for God cannot conflict with himself. Spinoza says that our ordinary loves beget suspicion, envy, and fear. When we attach an affection to material things, we are continually fearing that what we love we may lose. We are also suspicious of something which seems to have a greater merit than that which we love. We are jealous of those who possess more of that which we love. The love of God, Spinoza claimed as the highest love. It is the love of the eternal, the love of the immutable, a love for that which neither changes nor loses the essence of that which attracts us. There is no love, says Spinoza, which opposes the love of God, for it is an unchangeable human experience. Our consciousness is being absorbed into the consciousness of God when we love him, for: ". . . this intellectual love of mind toward God is the very love of God with which God loves himself, not insofar as He is Infinite, but insofar as He can be expressed by the

essence of the human mind considered under the form of eternity."

To experience God, pursue with all of your deepest devotion and faith that ideal which is the highest expression of which your inner self is capable. When the ideal has become a reality, when it moves you to the extent that it is part of your consciousness, dominates your thinking and your doing, and in it you find lasting peace and happiness, you are then *experiencing God.* —X.

The Problem of Dues

From an offhand consideration, it might seem that the ideal method in an organization, like that of AMORC, would be not to charge dues. It might seem that it would be more feasible, perhaps more in keeping with the high purposes of the Order, to allow members merely to make contributions on the basis of that rather hackneyed phrase, "a love offering." The only difficulty about that, from a practical point of view, is that the love of some persons is not as deep as that of others. All persons would be receiving equal benefits from the organization, but sharing *unequally* in the obligations and in the support of that of which they are members.

One of the basic principles of the Rosicrucian Order is that all members are accepted equally. All are fully recognized. There are no privileges shown to a member because of his professional, social, or economic status. A man who is a millionaire—and we have a number of members who are—and a man who works with his hands for very nominal wages each week are accepted alike. There are no social considerations shown to the wealthy member. Experience has shown us, however, that, in organizations which operate on the "love offering" basis, there is a very strong inclination to show preferences to the individual who makes the largest contributions. In other words, they cater to the wealthy member; they need his support to make up for those who do not contribute or who contribute very little. Consequently, inequality enters into the treatment of members. The big donor, the one who gives large "love offerings," gets special concessions and treatment and the individual who cannot contribute

generously does not. This does not enter into the situation where each member pays the same amount of dues. He is not evaluated on the basis of any financial contribution.

There is also the realistic side of this problem. The organization has its specific expenses each month; that must be obvious to any intelligent person. It has to pay for paper and printing, tons of it; it has every kind of office equipment and appliance to maintain, as well as the salaries of its personnel to pay. There are thousands of dollars spent in postage and in the maintenance of the grounds and buildings. These items must be met. If each member is paying a specific amount in dues and is, to any extent, prompt in this payment, the officers know that they can depend on a specific income to meet expenses. They can apportion amounts of money for this purpose and for that purpose. It gives them a certain amount of freedom in planning, because they have the wherewithal to carry it out.

The unthinking person sometimes criticizes AMORC for charging dues, on the basis that spiritual truths and teachings should have no price and should not be sold. We thoroughly agree with them in part. We have put no price on the teachings of the Order. It would certainly be an insult to the Rosicrucian teachings to think that they could be bought for two dollars a month. Furthermore, such unthinking persons often say, "In ancient times, even in the medieval period of the Order's history, there were no dues, just an occasional contribution by a member." That is true, but today's operation of the Order is entirely different from what it was in those times. A message would come by word of mouth that the brethren were going to meet at a certain place when the moon was high. It would be stated that one of the masters was to further instruct them in some of the teachings of the Order. Consequently, they would travel at their own expense to this distant place and stand out in the open, putting up with all kinds of inconveniences and making all kinds of sacrifices to hear the words of the itinerant teacher. Today the pressure of time and circumstances would not make that possible. The average member could not quickly leave his home, family and position, and travel to some place to receive the teachings orally, nor would he be content to stand out under

the hot sun or under the moon in the chill of the night, perhaps in a muddy field, to listen to words of wisdom from the teacher. Today he expects conveniences in everything in which he is interested. Today the average member wants to remain at home, except for a weekly visit to a lodge or chapter, and study in the privacy and convenience of his home. He wants the teachings and principles of the Order delivered to him. He is not just content with words; he wants charts, diagrams, illustrations, tests and examinations. It is for these things then, for these conveniences, for these methods of extending the teachings to him that the member pays his dues.

Those, who have been in the Order for even ten years' time, can, if they look back to when they first affiliated, realize that there are many things given to the member now that were not extended to him then. The monographs themselves have been increased in content, there are many extra enclosures, diagrams, charts, points dealing with the teachings and the improvement of the member, that were not given ten, fifteen, or twenty years ago. All these things are, naturally, an expense to the organization. They are an increase of benefit to the member and an increase in operational expense to the Order. However, the dues of the organization are still only two dollars a month, the same as they were in 1926. In the light of all the tremendous upsurge in costs, I believe that AMORC membership is one of the very few things that has not increased in cost to the individual.

Again, there are members, belonging to various other national fraternal organizations, who state that their dues in these other groups are only one dollar a month or perhaps eighteen dollars a year, and that their dues are, therefore, six or seven dollars cheaper a year than in AMORC. We admit this fact. However, many of those members do not realize that their *initiation fee* into those other organizations is sometimes forty to a hundred dollars higher than that of AMORC. Sometimes their initiation fee is equal to *ten years of membership dues* in AMORC and, on top of that, they still have to pay the one dollar or a dollar and a half a month to such an organization. Furthermore, membership in most other fraternal orders does not involve the sending or giving

to the members of anything having a material cost. The members belong to such an order and visit its lodges. They receive no magazines, no correspondence, no written answers, no charts, no diagrams, nothing except a membership card and the right to visit the lodge.

Now, I want to touch upon another problem in connection with this matter—something that is often misunderstood. The dues, as we have explained above, constitute a specific obligation on the part of the member. A member must realize that this is his obligation as long as he is a member, just as the Order has a specific obligation to him. There are no circumstances which mitigate or set aside that obligation. A member will sometimes make a contribution, a donation over and beyond his dues at times, and this is indeed much appreciated. The fact of the matter is that AMORC could not continue to operate and to carry on many of its non-revenue-producing activities, if it were not for such contributions. It could not maintain its Museum, it could not maintain its Planetarium, it could not give thousands of books to public libraries, it could not carry on the Council of Solace and similar activities without donations from members, for the simple reason that the dues, as we have said, are insufficient to meet all those expenses. When an individual makes this contribution and says that it is a donation, to be used for this or that purpose or as the Order sees fit, we have a right to presume that he means what he says. We do not think that he wants this applied on dues nor that we should take it into account when his dues become delinquent. Consequently, regardless of how many contributions a member may make, they are distinct and separate from his dues. Therefore, when his dues are in arrears, he receives a reminder of his delinquency just as do any of the other members, just as do members who have never given any donations. If, after the period of grace which is allowed a member has elapsed, his membership becomes inactive so far as the studies are concerned, such a member has no right to be offended.

When a member has gone many weeks without the payment of dues—months, in fact—and has never written any answers to our letters, we assume that he is not interested and discontinue his study member

ship. Often then, such a member finally writes to the Grand Lodge and, in his letter, he will take an attitude similar to this: "I am indeed surprised that the Rosicrucian Order would discontinue my active membership because I am a few months delinquent in dues, since, during the last two or three years, I have contributed twenty-five dollars in donations. I should think that the organization would take that into consideration." In other words, what the member is really saying is this: "I sent you twenty-five dollars in donations, but I also wanted you to consider it as extra dues in the event I become delinquent." We cannot do this. The contribution must be for one or the other thing. If the member wants to give it for dues, we will gladly credit it to dues. If he wants it to be a donation, then he should not expect it to affect his dues.

Let me also state that no student's membership, so far as the studies are concerned, is ever discontinued for delinquency in dues until that person has received several letters and notices advising him of his delinquency, asking him what is wrong and offering to be of help if possible. If the member writes that he is in a desperate situation and needs an extra thirty days, over and beyond the weeks of grace we have already allowed him, we are happy to make such an arrangement and proceed to do so. When the member ignores all our letters and allows his dues to continue delinquent, there is no other alternative for us but to assume that he is not interested, and for that reason we discontinue his membership.

When the war first began in Europe, many members, as we have explained, were unable to remit their dues to this country, because the transmitting of money was prohibited by their governments as a wartime measure. Obviously, the Order could not continue full membership to these members without dues, and there had to be some means to take up the slack in income for operation. Then there were members in some foreign countries who could transmit their dues to this country, but the exchange was so high they could not afford to pay the difference. This left a deficit to be made up, if they were to be carried. We proposed that our members in America become patrons of these unfortunate members and help them to continue membership by voluntarily add-

ing fifty cents to their own dues in this country. In other words, if a member would pay two dollars and fifty cents monthly, instead of the regular two dollars, the extra fifty cents would assist the Order in maintaining the membership of those who would otherwise have to discontinue. A good number of our members have done so, and we now have on hand some extra funds, more than was necessary to carry these members in foreign countries. This surplus fund will be used for *rehabilitation purposes*; namely, to help the Order establish itself in those lands in Europe that have been ravaged by war. We want to help them get out a magazine, help them get their literature printed, furnish new quarters and maintain a permanent secretary, for they are absolutely destitute. Consequently, we are asking all of you members who became *patron members*, and generously raised your dues to two dollars and a half a month, to please continue with the payment of that extra fifty cents monthly as long as you can.

Let me assure you that there is hardly a place where you could spend fifty cents that would do as much good as that particular fifty cents will. There are all kinds of government agencies collecting sums of money to buy clothes and food for peoples, but there are few government agencies that will provide money to help the individual orient himself, to re-find himself, to establish peace within himself, and rid himself of the hatred and bitterness of the past few years. I feel that the Rosicrucian teachings are most ideally adapted to such a problem, and therefore, your fifty cents, as patron dues, is going for a cultural and *spiritual charity*.—X

Mental Creating and Affirmations

A Soror of New York City addressing our FORUM, says: "In a recent lecture read in our New York Minor Lodge, there was cited the incident of a woman ill with cancer for many years, who had tried to cure herself with affirmations. The woman failed, it was stated, because she was affirming something that was not true. What is the difference between mental creating and affirmations?"

Affirming is making vocative an end desired. Examples of affirmations are: "I am well"; "I am becoming a success"; and so on. Conversely, mental creating is evolving by

a process or method, in proper sequence, the end desired. It must be apparent to every intelligent person that creating, bringing about an end desired, is much more practical than merely affirming that it exists, or that it shall exist. If what one affirms exists and is capable of objectively being realized, then, patently, it is not necessary to affirm it. If it does not exist so as to be objectively realized, then the intelligent approach is to create it. The man who is a success does not need to affirm it, that is, to declare that he is. If he is not a success, the delusion of saying that he is will not make him one.

It is common practice for many so-called mystical and metaphysical organizations to advocate the method of reciting affirmations. The first reason they give is psychological. It is held that the positive viewpoint, that one *is* or *will* do or realize something, is very necessary to bringing it about, especially if it is made vocative, that is, spoken. With this, anyone will agree, we must have the conviction that what we want is possible of coming into existence, or that it can be had. The negative attitude of mind disperses mental and physical powers.

The second and strongest emphasis these organizations give to affirmations is that the affirmation in itself will become a factor in manifesting the end desired. Thus, for example, they contend that if I affirm: "I will take a trip to New York," and say it often enough that it will draw out of the Cosmic, out of the subjective mind, or somewhere else, the necessary inchoate factors to materialize the wish. Such is fundamentally unsound mystically, and it is the weak aspect underlying the practice of affirmations expounded by such organizations. In fact, it borders on superstition, and is reminiscent of magic and primitive reasoning. It is a version of sympathetic or imitative magic. It consists of setting up an image, which is the affirmation itself, with the belief that there is an affinity or bond between it and the actual thing, because the affirmation resembles it. It is the assumption that in some way the affirmation will convert that which resembles it into its own nature. No amount of affirming, "I want a home," is going to draw the actual materials together and assemble them into a reality corresponding to the nature of my affirmation. The person who just affirms is *indolent*. He is mentally

and physically lazy. He is transferring entirely what is principally his own responsibility and obligation to something else. The affirmation serves best as a mental stimulus, as a necessary incentive for personal accomplishment. If I affirm that I want a home, I mean that that is my ideal, the end that I shall work for, but I will need to start to bring it about.

A combination of mental affirmations and mental creating is the most practical means of coming to realize what we desire. First, affirm what you want. Be certain that it is not a whim, that it emotionally moves you, thrills you when you contemplate it. When you affirm what you want, the mental picture which your words have formed, bring you happiness. Next, consider the subject of the affirmation, the thing desired, as the *end*, and yourself, your present status, as the *beginning*. There is obviously a void between the two, a void that must be bridged. Be fully aware that the void cannot be actually overcome by any theurgical power or any affirmations uttered like incantations. The beginning, your present status, must be enlarged to *grow* into what you have affirmed. Another way of looking at it is to think of what you want, the complete picture, as a circle. Then think of what you are and what you have now as a dot in the center of that circle. That dot must expand until it fills out the circle or until the dot and the circle are one.

Consequently, the first need is to try to determine how much of what you affirm, what you desire, exists as separate elements in your present circumstances, and knowing that, then you are conscious of what you need and what to concentrate upon. If I affirm that I shall have a home and wish as well to mentally create it, I should proceed as follows. I will reduce the picture of the home that I have in mind to its simplest components. I would determine, if I had the property, the lumber, the electrical equipment, paints, hardware, and necessary labor for the home. If I did not have these things, then did I have the money or the means of acquiring them? Suppose I had none of these things? I would then hold that the first step would be to acquire the money for my home. If my regular income would not be sufficient to provide such money, then I would need to render some service, to do something extra

to augment my income. I would realize that really the first step would be to make myself useful in some additional way so as to get the needed money. I would then hold definitely in mind the need for such service. I would suggest to myself, to the *inner self*, that I be inspired in my daily observations by some idea of service. I would ask the Cosmic to help *me* to find in my affairs something which by my own efforts I could convert into the act of service.

I would keep this thought in its simplest form, uppermost in my daily consciousness. I would draw to myself the needed suggestions for this service. Now, let me explain further. This drawing to myself would not be a magical power, a mere chanting of affirmations. It would be that I would become especially conscious of any circumstances or things which had any relationship to my need. I would, for analogy, be like a man very much in need of a piece of red paper. As he walked down the street, everything that was colored red would particularly attract his attention. He would be drawing this color to his attention. By association of ideas, all red things he observed would make him conscious of his need for red paper. Obviously, then, he would locate the red paper much more quickly than if he did not keep his need in mind. That is what we mean by drawing things to ourselves. By suggesting our need to the Cosmic and to our own subjective minds, we put these agencies to work for us. They point out, as a hunch, as an intuitive flash, or inspiration, things in our environment that we can use in our process of mentally creating.

As the term applies, you are a *creator*. Mentally you are a builder. You are the doer, the prime mover. The affirmer is a mere wisher. He wishes or wants something—and that is as far as it goes—unless he also employs mental creating. The combination of both mental creating and affirming, we repeat, is best. In fact, true mental creating is impossible without first affirming, first positively asserting to ourselves definitely and concisely what we want. The affirmation is the direction in which our creating power must go. It is the signpost telling us, "Move along this way. Your destination lies ahead." We cannot just start to create. We must first have the conception, the plan of that which is to be built. Can you imagine

a man sawing boards, planing them, and nailing them together haphazardly and then suddenly stopping to view what came out of his labors? That would be a kind of creating. It would be making something that perhaps did not exist before; however, without the intelligent direction, the results of that kind of creating would be *monstrosities* of little or no use to us.

Of course, in affirming or establishing an objective to be realized, we must avoid one that is contrary to Cosmic principles. We must not conceive something that is morally or ethically wrong, or is contrary to natural law. If we do, we may fail in our creating. And even if we do create something which is Cosmically wrong, it may like a Frankenstein prove to be our own undoing. However, in mentally creating, we always have the opportunity of first dissecting our affirmation, our objective into its many parts. Each part then is exposed to our understanding, and if any parts are malevolent or noxious, they can be extirpated and the entire purpose or mental picture revised before beginning.—X

Order of Melchizedek

A frater of San Francisco arises to ask our FORUM: "Who and what is the Order of Melchizedek? Why is it mentioned in the Bible?"

The name Melchizedek, literally translated, means "King of Righteousness." History and legend recount that Melchizedek was King of Salem. He was likewise a priest of the Most High, in the time of Abraham. He was, therefore, one of the Priest-Kings of antiquity, a combination not unusual in those times. As an example, after Cyrus the Persian liberated the Hebrews from Babylon and permitted them to return to Jerusalem, they started there a religio-state. The High Priest of the religion, which they organized and which became *Judaism*, was also the King of the state of Jerusalem.

It is related that Melchizedek brought out bread and wine for Abraham and blessed him. Abraham in turn gave Melchizedek tithes (Gen. XIV: 18-20). Here is a unique situation—Abraham, the prophet, the accounts of whose sayings and activities have become the basis for the Jewish religion, gives tithes to a king and High Priest. Whether

the latter is a fact or legend may never be known, but the tale has found its way into the Old Testament. Historically, however, there is no question of the fact that Melchizedek was a Priest-King. During a latter period when Alexandria reigned as the world's center of learning, the Jewish propagandists there were eager to win proselytes for Judaism. Melchizedek appealed to them. The stories about him could be used as an intriguing approach to Judaism. In the first place, Melchizedek was a non-Jewish monotheist. They could point out that even though he was not a Jew, yet he favored Abraham. He knew of the greatness of Abraham and of the prophet's views, and that he gave the prophet wine, bread, and his blessings, so the tale of Melchizedek was used as an instrument to win converts. These propagandists even went so far as to apotheosize Melchizedek; that is, they attributed high spiritual qualities to him. They placed him in the same category of glory as Elijah, Joseph, and David. They claimed for him what had been claimed for the other three, namely, that he partook of certain supernatural features; that he had no father and no mother, and was without beginning or end. In the Midrash, Hebrew scriptural exegesis, namely, traditions, it is related that Abraham learned the practice of charity from Melchizedek. I presume this arose from the account that Abraham gave tithes to the Priest-King. Philo, great Jewish eclectic philosopher, says of Melchizedek: "The logos (law), the priest whose inheritance is the true God."

A story is told of Melchizedek in the Ethiopian *Book of Adam and Eve*, before it was turned into a Christian work. The tale is perhaps of Egyptian origin in many of its elements. Out of that account sprang a sect that became known as the *Melchizedekites*. It is related that Noah told his son Shem, before his death, to: "take Melchizedek, the son of Canaan, whom God has chosen from all generations of men, and stand by the dead body of Adam after it has been brought from the Ark to Jerusalem, the center of the earth, and fulfill the ministry before God." Then the story recounts that the angel Michael took away Melchizedek, when fifteen years of age, from his father. The angel anointed Melchizedek as a Priest and brought him to Jerusalem, "the center of the earth."

The angel, likewise, told the lad's father to share the secret only with Shem. When they were in Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit spoke out of the Ark in the Temple, and after the body of Adam had been hidden, greeting Melchizedek as the "first-created of God." Shem then went forth, carrying bread and wine, and, assisted by the angel, brought the body of Adam to its destination. Then we are told that Melchizedek offered the bread and wine upon the altar they built near the place where Adam's body was deposited. Shem finally departed, leaving the lad in his garments of skin and under the sole protection of the angel. No one on earth, it is said, knew the whereabouts of Melchizedek until at last Abraham met him. In connection with the account of Abraham and his sacrifices in Jerusalem, it is interesting to note that the Temple where Abraham is said to have made his sacrifices, is the only monument revered alike by Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans.

The spiritual importance given to Melchizedek, his representing of the Holy Spirit, his carrying out a mission for God, his protection by an angel, made him a figure of strong appeal to the imagination. During the Third Century, a Christian sect was formed whose members were known as *Melchizedekites*. Their leader or organizer was Theodosius, a money changer. They expounded that Jesus was an ordinary man like any other mortal until the time of his baptism when the Spirit entered Him and He became *illuminated*. They also taught that Melchizedek was an intermediary between the angels and men. Further, that Abraham consulted Melchizedek because of his intermediary state. This, of course, was founded upon the tale of the angel Michael being Melchizedek's protector and communicating with him. This sect flourished for a while and had its own initiations and rituals comprising its "mysteries" or teachings.

During the early Eighteenth Century in Europe there were "Melchizedek Lodges" of Freemasons. It is related that these lodges were formed and bore their titles so as to admit Jews into the Masonic Order. A Degree was known as the Royal Priest, or the Degree of Melchizedek. In modern times there have been groups styling themselves in America and in Europe, the *Order of Melchizedek*.

They functioned as fraternal and secret orders. There is, however, no historical source which discloses that they have an unbroken lineal descent from the third-century Christian sect by the same name. Many interesting rites and teachings, it must be apparent, could be originated and "invented" to surround such an intriguing character, both historical and legendary, as Melchizedek. Such teachings, however, would in no way be utterances of Melchizedek, King of ancient Salem, nor could they ever be proven to have been his conceptions.—X

Learning to Concentrate

A frater in the Midwestern section of the United States directs an interesting question to our FORUM. He says: "Why is it so difficult to concentrate without becoming very easily distracted?"

Concentration is the focalizing of certain elements or forces. For example, a convergent lens *concentrates* the light; namely, focalizes that light which falls upon it. Mental concentration can function in various ways. It can be either predominantly negative or positive. When we concentrate our consciousness to be receptive to certain impulses coming to us through one of the peripheral senses, that is a form of negative concentration. An example of this is when we concentrate upon the voice of a speaker over the radio. We are directing, focusing if you wish, the sensitivity of our consciousness to the sensations of sound. We are not trying to accomplish anything outside of ourselves with our powers. Rather, we are trying to devote our whole objective sensitivity to just the auditory impressions we are receiving. A *positive* application of concentration is when we earnestly speak to another, when all effort is being put into the conversion of ideas into sounds to be communicated to another. In fact, we cannot speak intelligently unless we do concentrate on coordinating our thinking and speech.

The negative type of concentration, making our consciousness receptive to external impressions, is the one that presents difficulties to many persons. Psychologically we can be conscious of only *one* thing, one series of impressions at a time. We can be con-

scious, for example, of only visual impressions—things we see; auditory impressions—things we hear; or tactile impressions—things we feel, at any one time. This may seem to be inconsistent with your experience. You may often seem to hear and see something simultaneously, each kind of experience appearing to have equal attention value. What actually occurred, however, was that your consciousness was vacillating, alternating rapidly from one kind of impression to another. This alternation can be so rapid that we have the illusion of being conscious of two different kinds of sensations concomitantly. For analogy, it is like a man rapidly alternating the beam of a flashlight in the dark from one object to another. If he did it fast enough, you would not be conscious of the interval in between. It would seem as though both objects were illuminated simultaneously.

Nature has made this arrangement for a good purpose. To be fully aware of impulses coming through our senses, vibrations of things, it is necessary that the *whole* of our consciousness be focused upon it. If we were to be aware of several sense impressions of different kinds at one time, we would be confused. Further, we would be dispersing our consciousness, directing it in various channels. Consequently our consciousness of any one thing would be ineffectual. However, if our consciousness is made to continually and repeatedly vacillate from one kind of sensation to another, we also do not have sufficient time to realize fully any one kind of sensation. Our ideas or understanding of such sensations become vague and often confused. The difficulty with many persons is that they are permitting a vacillation of their consciousness. They are not harnessing it to one kind of impression. For example, while they are reading a book they are also trying to listen to the radio. Their consciousness is rapidly shifting from visual to auditory impressions. The result is that they get no satisfactory results, no real enjoyment from either.

Mental desire gives strength to *will*, and will focuses the consciousness. If you are, as we all are, continually exposed to a bombardment of impressions from the outside world, then it is necessary to choose which of such impressions we want to be lasting,

to retain, and to understand. There must be a sincere desire. You must really want to read, or to hear, or feel something. You must emotionally feel a greater gratification by concentrating the consciousness on certain kinds of sensations than on other ones. If I would rather listen to some silly, moronic, comic play on the radio than to read a book of useful information, then it is going to be most difficult for me to read, if the radio is within listening distance. My consciousness will be continually vacillating from my reading to listening to the radio. I will not have sufficient *desire* to give my consciousness the stimulus to focus it upon my reading. If you do not want to do what you are concentrating upon—if there is no satisfaction in it, or sense of duty—you will never sufficiently concentrate upon it. It may be easier for you to concentrate on a radio entertainment than a mathematical problem. However, if you really want to master the problem, if you believe it necessary, if your conviction is strong enough, you will be able to concentrate.

We are often engrossed by things which command our attention and hold our concentration *without effort*. An accident occurring before our eyes will hold our full visual attention without any effort. It is because the sensations we are experiencing produce strong emotional responses within us. There is an instinctive fascination about the dangerous situation occurring immediately before us that compels us to want to see it. Many sensations play directly upon our instincts and our basic emotions. They, therefore, arouse our curiosity, a natural desire which focuses our consciousness without effort on our part. For all else we must by our thinking *create* the desire within ourselves. If we do that we can easily concentrate. If you want to watch a ball game or boxing match, you have no difficulty in concentrating on it. If you want to watch a fashion review or hear a symphonic orchestra, you find no effort in concentrating. The degree of concentration is determined by the stimulus behind it—the desire. The desire, we repeat, is the impetus for concentrating. A person who does not want to study, who has no love for knowledge, who does not like to read other than effortless fiction, finds it most difficult to concentrate. When he places a book, a lecture, or monograph before him, his

consciousness is continually seeking to *escape*. It is moved by his other interests. It focuses upon those things it prefers or which are easier for it.

Many people have no intellectual desires. They are moved only by those things which are gratifying to the body and its appetites. They find satisfaction only in food, drink, and pleasures of the body, and that which keeps them from thinking. Such persons would find it almost impossible to study. Mental desires are foreign to them. Consequently, concentration on that which has no appeal to the mind would be extremely difficult for them. If you are indifferent about the subject upon which you are to concentrate, you will not succeed with it.

Awaken your curiosity before you begin to study. Stimulate your imagination so as to create sufficient desire or impetus for concentration. Ask yourself certain relevant leading questions, as: "Do I know this or that?" "Can man accomplish this or that?" "Why do we do this or that?" In other words have a self-quiz beforehand. Ask yourself questions that tease you, that will compel you to want to know the answers and which you think are related to the subject of the monograph. You will find that that will be sufficient incentive for you to concentrate on the contents, for you will be looking for and *wanting* that which will gratify the desire you have. The more you sustain a desire—namely, keep alive an interest—the easier it is to concentrate upon the subject of that interest. The person who *regularly* and *faithfully*, at a given time each week, studies his monographs finds it increasingly easier to concentrate upon them. The interest, the desire, is sustained from one week to the next. The person who irregularly studies loses the continuity of thought. The desire diminishes in intensity, or eventually disappears. The next time such a person picks up a monograph, he has no incentive to concentrate. There is no motivating appeal. His concentration, therefore, easily vacillates to that which does appeal.

Some persons complain that concentration is tiresome. Concentration is never fatiguing so long as it has the proper interest or desire stimulus. If concentration is fatiguing to a person it is because he does not want to focus his consciousness on the particular subject.

Did you ever hear of a fiction lover say concentration on a light, fascinating novel was tiresome? Did you ever hear the music lover say that his concentration upon the performance of a great musician was fatiguing? One's eyes may often tire from use, but concentration never tires one where the interest exists.

When you find that you cannot concentrate upon something, ask yourself: "Am I really interested?" If you are not quite certain, start to speculate on the nature of the subject upon which you are to concentrate. Arouse within yourself sufficient interest and you will find concentration easier. If you cannot do this, then you will not succeed because you do not want the subject of your concentration. On the other hand, concentration is most difficult if one is physically or mentally tired, no matter how great the interest. Do not try to concentrate on anything if you are exhausted. It is better to take a twenty-minute nap. You may feel so fatigued that you will believe a twenty-minute nap would not be sufficient—in most instances it will be. Complete relaxation for twenty minutes, in sound sleep, is the equivalent of renewing energy spent during two or three hours. When you awaken, stimulate yourself by washing your hands and face in cold water or taking a cold shower. You will then find concentration more facile, provided that there exists the *desire*.

It is, of course, always best, even when one has sufficient interest in a subject, not to concentrate upon it until first eliminating any distractions. Try to avoid any unnecessary extraneous sounds, extremenesses of temperature in the room, or anything which might compete for your attention. You must realize that the sensitivity of all people is not alike. Some are more sensitive to auditory impressions than visual ones, and vice versa. There are those persons who can listen more intently to a subject in which they have an interest, than they can concentrate on the same topic in a book. Such people must be particularly cautious to get away from sounds whenever they are going to read.

Success in anything, to a great extent, means intense interest. If you are only superficially interested in something, then the interest or desire, such as it is, soon passes away. Always in direct ratio to the

interest is the power of concentration. Concentration lessens with the interest. As concentration lessens, the mastery of the subject lessens, and failure enters where success might have been. You must have desire before you can have concentration.—X

Sanctum Privacy

Recently two important questions were asked at the Forum of the AMORC Nefertiti Minor Lodge in Chicago. They were: "When a person has no privacy at home to study, what is the best method to help oneself, particularly when instructions call for exercises, incense and vowels?" and "Because of conditions of privacy, does a substitute sanctum period in the morning have as good an effect as the regular Thursday night period?"

The problem of privacy is one that must be thoroughly considered by the individual. He cannot immediately assume that because he doesn't have the ideal conditions no privacy is possible, and that he must abandon the studies. Where another member of the family, a husband or wife, is not a member and yet is tolerant, a frank exposition of the problem is best. State that you are a member of a fraternal philosophical order, explain that your studies are constructive and good and yet, like those of any fraternal order, must be kept secret—that is, private. State that you have, therefore, selected Thursday evening or whatever time you do choose, for your own private study hour. State that you wish this privacy for study and for the practicing of certain exercises and that it will take an hour or two. Ask the other member or members of your family to respect your privacy during that time. A tolerant husband or wife, or other member of the family, will respect such a request.

Where intolerance and prejudice exist in the family, as unfortunately they often do, patently the problem of privacy becomes more complicated. If the wife is a member and cannot find privacy during the evening because of interference by other members of the family, then she should use an afternoon or morning period or some hour when others are away.

Let us presume that it is impossible for a man or woman to have privacy any hour during the day or night in their own home so as to be able to conduct the AMORC

rituals or exercises. If the member lives in a city where there is an AMORC lodge or chapter, he or she can arrange with the officers to arrive before convocations begin. These officers will provide one corner of the temple, where the member can read his monographs privately. Often the lodge or chapter officers will arrange, for a limited time, a corner of the lodge or chapter premises where a member can privately conduct his exercises. Again, suppose that there is no lodge or chapter in the city. Then, the member can, by correspondence with the Grand Lodge, sometimes be directed to another member who may have a sanctum which he could make available occasionally for the performance of rituals and exercises.

Some members, who have lacked privacy, have made a point of taking their monographs or studies regularly to their *Public Library*. There they find quiet and no interference. Then they have arranged with another member for the use of that member's sanctum occasionally for the necessary exercises, demonstrations, and rituals. During the spring, summer, and early fall, some members, not having privacy at home, have taken their monographs to nearby parks and, in the beauty of nature's temple, have studied and meditated and, if alone, have even practiced some of their exercises. The old adage, "where there is a will, there is a way," also applies to creating the privacy you need. Still other members, who have no privacy at home or who experience opposition to membership, have even gone to the homes of sympathetic friends. They ostensibly make a weekly visit to a friend for social reasons. The friend, even though not a member, understands the need for privacy and gladly provides the use of a room for an hour or two.

We have suggested that all members hold their sanctum period on a Thursday evening to assist in unity of thought and also because Thursday is the traditional sanctum day. Let us suppose that each member begins his period of meditation at eight o'clock P. M., local time, each Thursday. Since there are Rosicrucian sanctum members in every part of the world, it would mean that actually, whenever you begin to meditate on Thursday, you would become attuned with members situated in their sanctums in some part

of the world at eight o'clock their time, although it might be a different hour by your time. However, it even goes beyond this. Since circumstances prevent many members, throughout the world, from conducting their sanctum periods on Thursday, they have had to substitute other days and hours during the week. Therefore, whenever you have your sanctum period, you will be participating with a number of other members in different parts of the world who are in Cosmic attunement. The efficacy of a sanctum period exists principally in the devotion of the member, the sincerity and effort he puts forth and the elevation of his consciousness to the Cathedral of the Soul where repose the minds of others. No matter what hour a member has chosen for his sanctum period, if he is sincere and if he successfully applies the mystical principles which have been given him and his consciousness is introverted and, through self, reaches the Cosmic, he will produce effects of a lasting and beneficial nature. I repeat that we prefer that Thursday night be retained as the sanctum night, if possible, because of its traditional nature. However, so far as the mystical elements, or attunement with others and with the Cosmic are concerned, almost any hour is potential with success, if the sanctum period is conducted properly.—X

Are the Teachings Dangerous?

Here we are going to answer another question which was asked at the Forum session of the Nefertiti Minor Lodge in Chicago. The question is: "Will any of the things we do in our work at any time have a tendency to lower our vitality and our resistance?"

It is presumed that the word "work" as used in the question, refers to the Rosicrucian teachings, practices and exercises. It should be apparent, from statistics and the testing of time, that if there are any serious deficiencies in the teachings, and if the principles of the organization are fundamentally unsound, it would have been manifested a great many times. Thousands and thousands of persons have crossed the threshold of AMORC and have become members. Thousands and thousands of them, in every part of the world, have been members of the Order for years and are still members. They are persons from every walk of life, the

highest to the lowest. The great majority of these persons, whether of the professional class or otherwise, are profuse in their praise of what the work of the Order and teachings have done for them. They state that the work has not only given them a greater insight into the so-called mysteries of the universe and their own being, that it has not only brought them greater enlightenment and peace of mind, but that it has helped them in a practical way. It has helped them with their health and with their thinking. It has relieved them of fears and superstitions. This should be sufficient proof that inherently there is nothing dangerous or contrary to nature's laws in the Rosicrucian teachings.

It is true that the most constructive principle or thing can at times become an instrument for wrongdoing and, as such, be destructive. A chalice or a cross, or any sacerdotal appurtenance or instrument meant for spiritual use, can become a lethal weapon. It can be used to strike down a man and take his life. If that does occur, certainly no intelligent person would say that a cross or chalice is a murderous weapon. Instead, they would say that those things have been wrongfully used and that there was nothing intrinsically wrong or malevolent in the things themselves. As another analogy, let us suppose that your physician advises you that exercise is as essential to good health as are nutrition and rest, since exercise causes the heart to beat faster, the blood to circulate more rapidly, and the breathing to become deeper, and all of these things are beneficial, everything being equal. However, an exercise that is conducive to health when a person is *normal*, might be the means of taking the life of a person who is not normal. Likewise, the exercise that might bring the bloom of health to the cheeks of a young person, such as playing tennis, might bring the pallor of death to the face of an elderly person who tried the same strenuous exercise.

The Rosicrucian teachings are constructive and beneficial when used rightly, not done in excess, and when the person is normal. Let us take, for example, the breathing exercises which are included in the teachings of AMORC. These exercises are not as excessive as are some of the breathing exercises of the Oriental philosophies or of Yoga, for instance. No person, with a normal heart

and free from a respiratory disease, can in any way be detrimentally affected by the Rosicrucian breathing exercises if he follows the instructions given in the monographs. We do, however, credit the member with ordinary intelligence. We, the officers and instructors of AMORC, cannot know whether or not a member has a serious respiratory disease, such as tuberculosis. The member knows if he has it and, consequently, he knows that, because of this condition, he cannot participate in certain things. Therefore, such a member should, naturally, refrain from the breathing exercises, not because the exercises are at fault, but because he is not in condition to make use of them. If such a member proceeds with the breathing exercises and is detrimentally affected and devitalized, we cannot say that the Rosicrucian teachings are responsible but rather the lack of good common sense of the individual.

It is true that members are required to concentrate in conducting a number of exercises or studies. Yet this concentration is not excessive. In reality, it is not as much as is required of many students of the sciences, such as, biology and bacteriology. They spend hours concentrating, through microscopes, to note organic changes and make records of them. They are concentrating more intensely and spending far more energy than a Rosicrucian does in his concentration studies. If an individual lowers the standard of his health in the study of bacteriology, because of long periods of concentration, one cannot blame the science of bacteriology. It is not at fault. Rather, it should be said that the student should have used good judgment. He should have disciplined himself. He should not have concentrated to excess. So it is with the Rosicrucian teachings. You are given specific periods of time to conduct these exercises, periods of time which we know are not injurious to any person having a reasonable degree of health. If a member, of his own accord, concentrates or performs some exercise four or five times the length of time required and thereby injures himself, he is at fault, not the Rosicrucian teachings. Therefore, I assure you that there is nothing that you will be asked to do in the monographs that will lower your vitality or your resistance, if you are a normal person and follow the instructions; on the contrary, *these exercises will be beneficial*.—X

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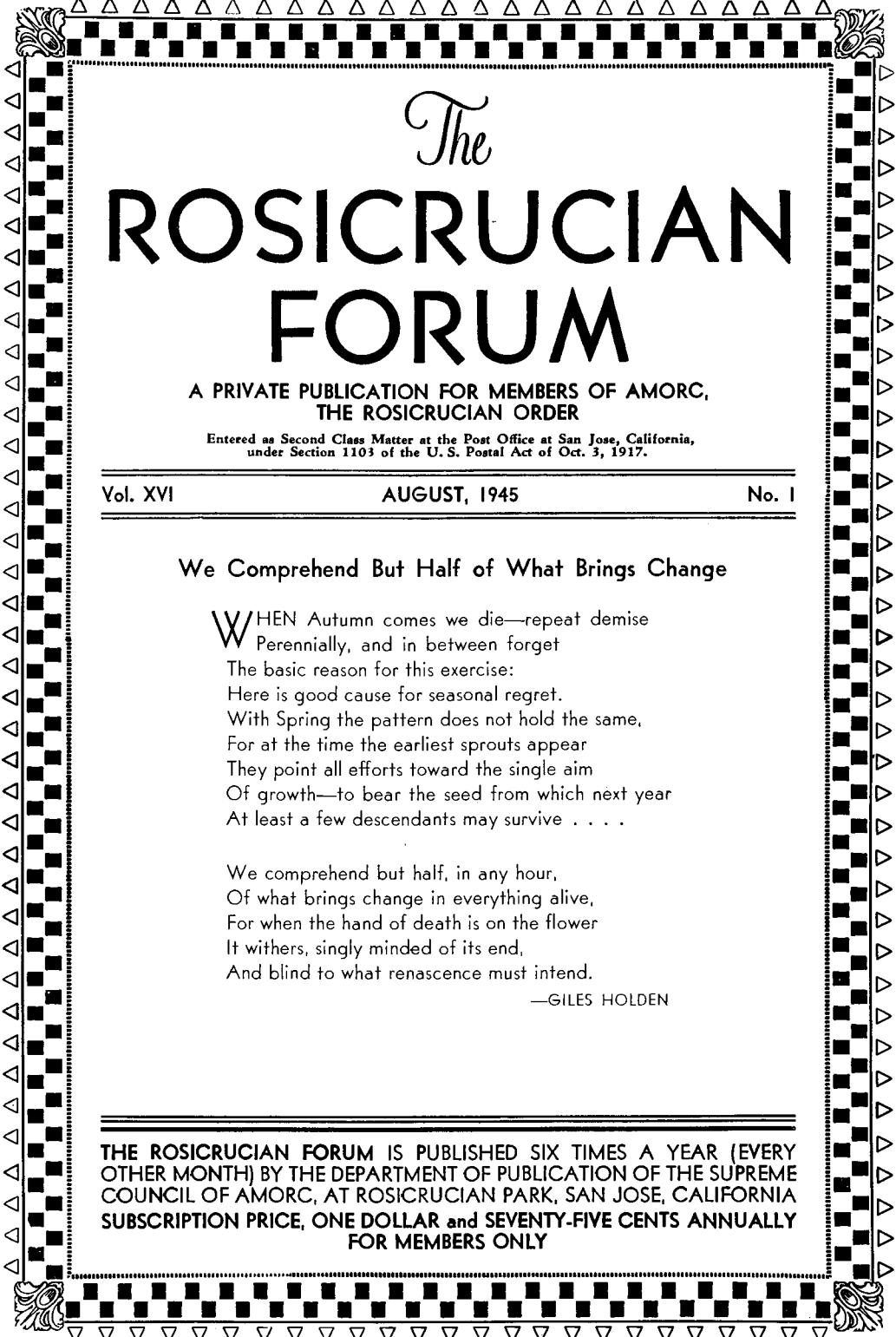
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No. I

We Comprehend But Half of What Brings Change

WHEN Autumn comes we die—repeat demise
Perennially, and in between forget
The basic reason for this exercise:
Here is good cause for seasonal regret.
With Spring the pattern does not hold the same,
For at the time the earliest sprouts appear
They point all efforts toward the single aim
Of growth—to bear the seed from which next year
At least a few descendants may survive

We comprehend but half, in any hour,
Of what brings change in everything alive,
For when the hand of death is on the flower
It withers, singly minded of its end,
And blind to what renascence must intend.

—GILES HOLDEN

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Greetings!



Dear Fratres and Sorores:

The two greatest contributing factors to war are *poverty* and *power*. The former is a physiological cause, and the latter is a psychological one. The gnawing, impelling urge for food will compel a people to cast aside all normal judgment and restraint. The risk of life and of properties means little to the human who is continually haunted by the need of the bare necessities of living. Life without such necessities is a torture not to be endured. It is considered worth the gamble of death to be free from abject poverty and all of its horrible accompaniments. It has been truly said that there are many things worse than death. Slow starvation and the resultant disease, pain, and months or years of mental torment are such things. The people who intentionally or unwittingly, through stupid government regulations, cause a nation to be economically throttled and thus starved are provoking war—a war in which no quarter will be shown by the enemy.

The love of conquest does not always begin with military aggression, but often may lead to it. The active mind loves domination over its environment, and those circumstances which challenge it. The student, the philosopher, and the scientist love to exert the power of their minds over the mysteries of the *unknown*. They like to experience mastery of self over the forces of nature. Such mastery is a satisfaction to the ego, yet it is constructive and beneficial to the whole of humanity. The philosopher who dissolves the superstition by revealing the mental causes which produced it, finds great satisfaction in his achievement. In addition, however, he has been a benefactor to humanity. The same may be said of the scientist who devises a time-saving instrument. Such persons find satisfaction in the application of their *personal power*. What may later be derived as personal gain from such power is of no concern to them. Most of the great philosophers were not rich in worldly goods. Many of the great scientists and inventors were

likewise not wealthy men. Even if wealth did inure to them later as a consequence of their creative powers, it was evaluated by them as very much less than their joy of accomplishment.

It is, therefore, not wrong to have a love of power. It is in the application of the power that danger arises. The man or men who have made their end in life the accumulation of natural resources, or a gaining of the wealth of facilities, are the ones who are really dangerous to humanity. Their spirit of conquest is tainted with avarice and cupidity. They want power for *possession*. Power for possession results in its use against others. The lover of power for possession is not content to have all that which he may need of something. He has also the perverted desire to have more than any other may possess. Further, such a use of power seeks to prevent others from having to the same extent. It is, in other words, the restricted use of power, the attempt to immure things or conditions with it. The person who uses his powers to force entry into a source of supplies which others may share in some manner may rightly love power, but it is used as a benefactor of society. The one who employs his power to bar the way for others is not a real lover of power. He is not really enjoying the energy or force he is bringing to bear, but rather the ends which make it available to him alone.

Today, therefore, any nation, or peoples, which interprets or applies its economic, financial, and military power, in the sense of denying or restricting equal opportunities for prosperity, freedom, and happiness to other nations, is a provoker of war. A nation which because of its natural resources and availability to trade routes, technical skill, and monetary wealth, has acquired a power of accomplishment is duty bound to exercise a portion of such power toward assisting less fortunate nations. The challenge of conquest which compels the exertion of such power cannot be confined to the territorial requirements of a single nation alone. One cannot

consider himself, for analogy, a successful physician if he has just applied the power of his therapeutic skill to his own community, when disease is rampant in an adjoining settlement. A powerful nation in the future must be construed in the terms of one that accepts the challenge of world conditions. It must be ready to use the might of its resources and skill to preserve for humanity what it also enjoys for itself. The real lover of power finds his joy in exerting it under and in all circumstances and conditions, whether the results inure just to his immediate benefit or to others as well. A true application of political and economic power must therefore be *impersonal*. It must work for all humanity collectively. Whenever the power is confined to national interests exclusively, it is an example of its misapplication and the danger signal of war.

If poverty is a provocative of war, then the powerful nations, to rightly use their power, must ever accept the challenge of poverty wherever it exists throughout the world. People may see eye to eye on the need of food, security, and comforts. However, after these physical needs are met, a succession of different interests develops. These divergent interests are due to tradition and endemic customs. It may take many centuries, with all of our technical developments, until there will be any standardization of living which will unite people. This pursuit of often extremely different aims makes it difficult for a people of one nation to understand another and to be sympathetic to their needs. Especially is this so where ideals or intellectual aims are had. An example of such intellectual idealism is the various political ideologies of today which bring the people in conflict with each other. If it is more generally realized that humans are still far more *emotional* than intellectual, this difficulty can be bridged.

More often the emotional nature finds its satisfaction in certain cultural pursuits. An audience of Russian, French, German, English, and Americans who are responsive to music will alike enjoy a symphonic concert. All of their intellectual, social, and traditional heritages and differences are bridged by this single emotional appeal—the love of music. The same can be said of painting,

sculpturing, and handcrafts. If the great powers will sponsor international art exhibits and concerts, a bond of fellowship will be established between all peoples. A common ground of appreciation and regard for each other's cultural ideals will be had which will subordinate the intellectual ones out of which conflict now often arises. It is often believed that the extremes of intellectualism which exist between peoples — those who differ from you in their views—make such persons strange and to be suspected. When it can be shown that the depth of feeling of those who do not necessarily think as we do is the same as our own, hostility disappears. They become to us "brothers beneath the skin." A people who have one major interest in common are more tolerant of the lesser differences between them.

In the Rosicrucian Oriental, Egyptian Museum, we have proven this to be a fact. Periodically in one of our galleries we display exhibits of paintings done by celebrated artists of foreign nations. The collections of paintings are either released from New York or San Francisco. Recently we exhibited the work of contemporary celebrated Australian and New Zealand artists. The love of art attracted to the Rosicrucian Museum upon this occasion, people who perhaps would have been otherwise hostile to what they imagined to be the Rosicrucian philosophical or intellectual ideals. Their appreciation of our display of this art, on the other hand, did not necessarily invoke an interest in Rosicrucianism, nor was it so intended, but it did make them friendly and more *tolerant* of our other efforts. The average man can *feel* more deeply than he can think. Cultural unity, therefore, must be furthered by the exchange of that which appeals to the higher emotions and sentiments of peoples everywhere. A brotherhood of mankind can more often be sensed through the work of music or art than through the words of a philosopher. When men feel they are *one*, then later they can define that oneness in terms of principles and laws which they might collectively understand.

Fraternally,
RALPH M. LEWIS,
Imperator.

Can Projection be Wrongly Used?

Occasionally there comes to my attention correspondence from members who claim that they are being persecuted by means of *psychic projection*. This type of correspondence—and oral complaint—has become frequent enough for us to consider it in this FORUM.

The principles underlying the projection of the psychic consciousness or the consciousness of the inner self have been thoroughly illustrated in the monographs of the teachings. For this purpose, it will be sufficient to merely touch upon one or two of the basic principles of the phenomenon.

The human is a matrix of vibratory energy, vibrations of various frequencies and consisting of the two polarities, namely, positive and negative. As a whole, the vibratory energy of the body—the material nature of man—is predominantly negative. This is because the chemical elements of man's nature are composed of that spirit energy which underlies all matter. This spirit energy, or electronic energy, if you will, is both positive and negative in its polarity. However, in contrast to still another energy, it is predominantly negative. This other energy in man is the V.L.F. (Vital Life Force), which imbues every cell and is of the Universal Consciousness of the Cosmic. In comparison to the energy of matter, it is more infinite, less restricted and thus more positive in its polarity. The human aura is a combination of these two energies: the spirit energy of matter which is predominantly negative, and the predominantly positive energy of the V.L.F. of the soul force.

Projection of consciousness is actually a projecting of the consciousness of the soul force within us, in accordance with some idea or concept which we may have. Let us use an analogy, to better understand this principle. An electric current flows from a generator through an electric lamp. The current in the lamp is always directly connected with its source, the generator. The current in the lamp manifests by heating the elements and becoming *light*. The light that radiates from the lamp we may liken to the ego, the self. The light is an attribute of the current and dependent upon it, and so also is the ego or psychic self, dependent upon

the positive polarity or soul force which is in us.

Psychic projection, to use the analogy again, consists, then, of having the light of the lamp spread out farther and farther, either in one direction or in all directions, as we may desire. The projection of that light is really a projection of the manifestation of the electric current that is within it. Our ego, then, or self is our consciousness of the soul force within us; namely, the soul force within man manifests as the consciousness of self. When we project, we are extending that consciousness of self into space. Physically you may be situated in a room of your own home, but the self, the *you* is wherever the consciousness of self is, namely, wherever you realize yourself to be, which could be on the other side of the earth from where your body is situated. When you become engrossed, for analogy, in a motion picture, as we are told in our monographs, the self becomes closely identified with the characters in the story, or lost in the incidents of the play. You then have projected your self into the screen. You are no longer aware of where your physical body is.

Projection of consciousness can be either *passive* or *active*. If passive, we have become receptive to the incidents and circumstances of the place to which our psychic self is projecting. Thus, if I desire to project to a certain European city, with which I am familiar, and use the technique given in our monographs for the purpose, and if I am successful I would find myself, in *consciousness*, in that city. Under such circumstances, I will not appear there as a physical being, that is, I will not see myself walking about as one would see his image in a dream. Rather, it would be as though I were looking out of a dark doorway upon a scene. My own image would not be visible, yet in consciousness I would be there and I would be able to perceive all that happened. I might have sentient experiences, that is, I might feel, see, hear, and smell what occurs at the locale. However, so long as I remain but an observer or spectator and do nothing more, mine would be *passive* projection. Conversely, if in projection we try to communicate with another, or to make ourselves visible in any form so that our presence can be realized, then we are *active* in our projection.

How is this phenomenon, which has been known by many different names such as bilocation, Epiphany, and empathy, accomplished? As said, the specific procedure to be followed by the member is related in the monographs. The basic principle is that the psychic self is of a positive polarity, since it is a manifestation of the Cosmic or Universal Soul force in man. Consequently, like the soul force, it has no restriction and it need not be *body-bound*. It can be projected anywhere, any time into the Cosmic. However, a malevolent thought, a thought associated with hate, jealousy, envy, et cetera, is negative, somatic, and earthly. If such thoughts, as purposes, are associated with the desire to project, then the psychic self or inner consciousness is not able to reach out into the Cosmic. It is blocked by an unsurmountable barrier. Thoughts which are destructive and malevolent are limited to the objective consciousness of the persons thinking them. No matter how strenuously such an individual tries to reach out with such thoughts and to project self with them, they go no further than a few feet in their influence. Such thoughts may be felt in the limited negative vibrations of the human aura. We have said that the negative vibrations of the human aura are of the material or earthly substance of the body. They are thus more limited and not able to radiate from the body more than a few feet. In the immediate presence of such a person, we may experience his acrimonious intents as a feeling of unrest on our part, or a feeling of repugnance toward him.

Furthermore, there is another factor which protects every human from the attempts of others to project their psychic self for improper or immoral purposes, and this is the *conscience*. The conscience of an individual represents the highest moral idealism of which he is able to conceive. It arises from a perception of the Divine qualities of his own nature, and a defining of those qualities into terms of moral values. What we as individuals morally will not consciously subscribe to becomes a bulwark of protection against the vicious thoughts of others. Our conscience or moral precepts are firmly established in our subjective minds. They have become a law to the subjective, by our continual abiding by them and making of them a habit. Therefore, when we are asleep

or in a so-called subjective state, these precepts are active and prevent a violation of our spiritual selves. They work by reflex, repelling any thought that may reach the inner consciousness and which is contra to them.

This is not merely a mystical dissertation or speculation. It has also been easily proven by numerous experiments in hypnosis, hypnosis conducted for psychological and therapeutic purposes. It is an established fact that a person who has been placed in a hypnotic state, and has voluntarily submitted his will and objective powers to those of the operator cannot be compelled to do anything which is in conflict with his moral sense. Such an individual, when in a hypnotic state, instead of being able to reason for himself and suggest to his own subjective mind, has the objective reason and will of the operator supplant his own functions. Consequently, the subject, the one in the hypnotic state, will obey every command or suggestion of the operator. The subjective mind obeys the command, as it is the function of the subjective to do so. However, whenever a command is issued by the operator, as a test, that the subject should resort to conduct or language which is contrary to his moral sense or conscience, the subject will be found not to respond. It means that the subjective mind has repelled the suggestion that the law established there as the result of habit is invoked. This law acts as a *guardian of the threshold* of the consciousness and actions of the individual. Persons in hypnotic states, as a matter of experimentation, have been asked to resort to obscenity and indecent acts, and the subject has always remained silent and immobile. This indicates that such things were contrary to the normal moral sense and law of the subject.

In one of our monographs concerning projection, and in giving assurance to our members that others could not take possession of them by means of projection for any improper purposes, we say: "What in your waking state you would not permit, in a sense of decency, would not and could not be possible when you are asleep or in a subjective state, and at a time when the inner self stands guard." Then, again: "Your moral standards and your conduct which have become a habit put a wall of sanctity

and safety around you which no projection can invade for improper purposes."

In spite of these age-old mystical principles, and in spite of the fact that they have been empirically proven by hypnosis, there are those persons who insist in tormenting themselves by the belief that they are being violated by the improper thoughts and acts of another while they sleep, and by means of psychic projection. They will insist that they have on occasion seen psychic personalities, with evil leers on their faces, enter the privacy of their bed chambers. They further relate that such *projected* personalities made improper advances toward them, or other acts which terrified them. Were such experiences actual exceptions to the Cosmic principles? The answer is *no*. Investigation of such cases has invariably revealed that a series of events have led up to such delusions.

Usually the person has had some previous shock or terrifying experience in connection with the personality, which he later imagines is projecting to him for improper purposes. The shock of the objective experience causes a *phobia*, a fixation in the subjective mind. Subsequently the individual broods over the experience and such brooding enlarges it in his mind, and finally he comes to dwell upon this fixation almost every conscious hour. Little illnesses, minor misfortunes, or minor unfavorable incidents he begins to attribute to the "influence" of that personality. The realization of the personality becomes greater and greater within the subjective mind where the phobia has been established. Eventually the person actually imagines the physical presence of the personality at all hours. To put it more simply, the impressions of the personality from within, the result of the illusion, are such intense sensations that the individual is unable to distinguish between them and reality, that is, the things he sees or hears objectively. It reaches the unfortunate stage where the victim's reactions to his phobia are actually confused with normal objective experiences. The unfortunate person is sure he has actually seen or heard in his presence the person whom he fears, endeavoring to inflict harm upon him psychically.

Such a victim of this fear may actually have known, by previous study, that Cosmically such projections are impossible, yet, because of his phobia, the experiences as

built up within his subjective have become so real that he can no longer deny them, any more than he can deny that he sees some object outside of his window. The only solution is to try to remove the phobia, to go behind the cause and extirpate it from the subconscious mind. This has often been done effectively through medical hypnosis, by a trained psychologist or psychiatrist. The procedure is a simple one. The patient is put (voluntarily, of course) into a hypnotic sleep. Then a counter suggestion opposing the nature of the phobia is implanted in the subjective mind, by repeating it numerous times. It becomes a law just as it would if it had been suggested by the objective mind of the patient to himself. The counter suggestion is, of course, associated with the phobia as a *related* idea. The subject does not objectively know what has been said to him while he was in the hypnotic state. In the post-hypnotic state—namely, when he is again normal, and while going about his affairs—if the phobia thereafter again begins to take possession of him, by association the counter idea arises simultaneously and ameliorates it. In this way, the efficacy of the phobia is gradually diminished to a point where the patient is able to compose himself, his will is strengthened, and he is thereafter able to discipline his own mind.—X

Our Personal Problems

A letter from one of our members recently brought forcibly to our attention the question of the solution of problems in respect to our own personal affairs. A personal problem might be considered to include all of those that have to do in any way with the regularity of our daily living. Anything that interferes with our own desires and plans becomes in itself a problem, and, at the same time, if approached properly, the problem becomes a challenge—a challenge to redirect our efforts to bring about a state of equilibrium or adjustment in our affairs and environment that will cause the interference to no longer be a problem.

If we are successful in reaching such a state—in other words, if the interference which has hindered us in some way no longer exists, we consider the problem solved. We therefore come to look upon problems as a challenge to solution and frequently under-

estimate the fact that the solution itself is not a mere result of wrestling with the problem but of adjusting our outlook or views or lives and parts of our environment in order to take in the circumstances that have been brought about by any change or interference.

It is difficult to discuss the solution or adjustment of problems, because every problem is so personal that it is closely tied up with our own personal reactions. Even a problem which is a problem to a nation, a race, or community affects every member, but the effect is different, in some respects, upon each individual of the group. If the ready course of our lives is interrupted by an earthquake, storm, or fire that may affect all the members of our community, it becomes a community problem to readjust that group activity back to somewhat normal circumstances, and as a member of the group we each participate in the problems as a whole. In some respects, each member of that community will be personally affected in such a way that he will have adjustments to make for the solution of the problem which will be different from anyone else's.

Most problems are less general. Problems of health, finances, employment, or social adjustment are more closely related to our own personalities. In other words, to return to the beginning of these comments, our personalities are adjusted to a certain state of environment, and any interference with that adjustment raises a problem. This process of eliminating annoying or interfering matters in our environment has monopolized so much time of the human race that problem solving has become one of the most important factors that each of us has to face in trying to attain a certain amount of independence and happiness. Therefore, man has directed a great deal of attention toward trying to find methods of problem solution. Man has been fooled time and time again by those who would hold out mysterious or even magic ways by which problems could be solved. Throughout the civilized world there are those who capitalize upon the problems of other people by proclaiming through one method or another to be able to solve them, and interestingly enough, in most cases the solutions are made for a certain fee.

Now no problem is so simple—that is, if it concerns the progress of our lives to any great extent—that it can be solved by merely

trying to fit it into a formula or process. In other words, there is no process, magic key, or formula to which we as individuals can take each problem, and by fitting the pieces together or by having a certain ritual performed bring about any solution. The solution of problems is, as already pointed out, the changing of the status of our lives to fit the altered circumstances. For an example, if an individual through an accident becomes totally blind, it is quite obvious that he has suffered what is ordinarily called a most unfortunate accident. Surely no one will deny that the interference with his previous mode of living and adaptability of his personality to environment is most seriously impeded. In fact, there are few problems that could develop more seriously to the ordinary individual than to lose complete use of a sense faculty, particularly the sense of sight. Nevertheless, we all know of individuals who have had such losses and who continued to live not only with an attainment of a certain degree of happiness and contentment, but continued to live usefully. The great Helen Keller did not have the use of a number of sense faculties, and yet lived not only a normally useful life, but became great. I think I have referred before, in the *Forum*, to a musician who became an outstanding organist even after losing his sight in his senior year of college.

Now, these individuals who in spite of such radical interference in their lives have gone on to build a certain fundamental philosophy of life and attain reasonable happiness in adjustment to their environment have not solved their problem in the sense of doing away with the causes of the change, but have adjusted their lives to the demand of the condition and therefore should be given credit for very satisfactorily solving their problem. In other words, the solution of personal problems can be brought down to the consideration that the problem cannot be solved always in terms of our individual concept of what the solution should be. Nevertheless, a solution can be forthcoming.

To refer to our illustration again of the individual who became blind, the only solution that he could first consider would be the recovery of sight. The ultimate solution, as in the case of those illustrations given, is not the recovery of sight but of the readjustment of their affairs in such a way that the incon-

venience or calamity which they had suffered would have as little bearing as possible upon the continuation of their normal lives. Surely, and there is no doubt, it has been proved that if these individuals can go ahead in spite of such affliction, then most of our other problems, the problems that each of us has from day to day, are much less in proportion to the total expanse of our lives.

If our problem is one of health, then we are going to have to learn to live in terms of our limitations. An individual may suffer from a malady affecting the heart that has been brought about by some condition, whether inherited weakness in that organ or causing it to bear too large a load, but there are many people who are so afflicted that realize the limitations of their physical being and fully become aware that the solution of that problem can never be had by the restoration of a perfect heart, but that they can live quite well by the observation of certain rules in spite of the condition.

It is not well that any of us should concentrate our whole efforts and plans upon the solution of any one problem. If we direct all our efforts toward trying to solve one problem in terms of the way we want it solved, we are neglecting the very thing that will bring a satisfactory adjustment to our lives. In other words, if we think financial independence is the key to happiness and we concentrate all our time to acquiring such a state, we are not gaining other experiences that should be having our attention, and our lives will fail to be well rounded. Do not develop the idea that membership in this organization or in any other thing that you do is going to be the solution to a pet problem, but fully realize that any constructive activity, and, by all means, the philosophy taught by this organization, can be the foundation for a scope of viewpoint and philosophy of life that would teach us to minimize those things which hold us back and annoy us, and to enlarge upon the potentialities that will bring us happiness, contentment, and ultimate satisfaction in living.—A

Making Predictions

A soror of Southern California now arises to speak to our FORUM: "I do not quite grasp the statement that one may bring about that which one predicts and that only construc-

tive predictions should be entertained, lest we should become responsible for the results of an adverse prediction. In Cosmic and karmic law, results follow causes, and to predict these results is a natural sequence of what has already followed a rule. If one is psychic or has intuition enough to foresee that certain events are inevitable in the lives of some people because of the cause that will produce such an effect, should a person who was able to foresee these future happenings be held responsible for their occurrence?"

"The prophets of old foretold dire disasters to individuals and nations, but they did not bring them about by expressing what they knew would take place. Of course, there is such a thing as wishful thinking, and some people predict disaster in the lives of others because they would like it to be so. I can readily see that that would be wrong and one might be responsible for such thinking. Can you give me some light on this subject?"

The soror's interest in this subject was engendered by a recent monograph which she read and which touched upon it in a general way. Perhaps many have had experiences similar to some I have had. Often in my musings, I could see by reasoning that if certain events would occur as causes, there would immediately follow as effects undesirable ends. I would be shocked at the probability of such undesirable happenings. The causes, so far as I know, did not yet exist, but were potential. I would dismiss the entire reasoning from my consciousness as distasteful to me. We often try to escape thoughts that are realistic but not pleasant. Some days or weeks later, an event would occur just as I had foreseen its possibility. My original prediction consisted in my realizing certain potential causes and in knowing that a concatenation of such causes would produce certain effects.

The question arises—did I by formulating this prediction, relating the causes to their probable results in my mind, give them actual existence outside of myself? Simply put, did I make my predictions come true? Emotionally, whenever I had such an experience—that is, whenever I fully realized a prediction by combining certain probable causes and their effects in my mind—I was always most distressed by it. Most of these experiences, these predictions touched upon my own life, that is, had to do with my own

personal affairs. There was always the uncanny relationship or similarity between what had been the thought in my mind and an eventual very real happening. I am led to believe that a formulating of these predictions in my own mind did, in a psychological manner, transmute them into an actuality, which might otherwise not have come to pass.

Let us look at it this way: once the prediction was complete in my mind, with all of its elements, its causes and effects, it constituted a very powerful suggestion to my subjective mind because of the emotional response which accompanied it. My subjective mind became very much aware of these conditions, these potential causes, of which it might not have taken cognizance before. Thereupon, I began to be drawn to the very things of these causes, to act objectively in the very manner as I had predicted each effect would follow the cause. My behavior, of which I was not objectively aware at the time, began to follow the very pattern of my own prediction, like a person walking in his sleep and not being aware of it objectively. The force of the suggestion to my subjective mind, when I created the prediction, caused it to direct me objectively along those very channels. Finally, I made my own prediction come true. After the fulfillment of such predictions, to my dismay, I invariably analyzed all of my previous actions, and found that they had actually conformed to the pattern that I had originally conceived. No one else had fulfilled my prognostication or had influenced it. I alone had brought into existence the very causes I had conceived as possible. So many times has this happened in my own affairs that I know it is not imaginary, and there is of course no supernatural basis for it.

Does this occur only when adverse predictions are made? It likewise functions for those predictions of a beneficial nature—but not so frequently. The reason why I surmise this is so is because the constructive prediction very seldom carries with it the same emphasis as does the adverse one. We are continually planning, each of us, and hoping for the betterment of ourselves and our affairs. We almost continually have certain ideals in mind. There is no element of surprise connected with such thoughts. We, however, do not continually think of ad-

verse possibilities. Therefore, when in our thinking we predict very logically and easily adverse circumstances, such a prediction carries with it an emotional impact. It is this shock which gives emphasis to the idea, to our adverse prediction, and makes it become a strong suggestion to our subjective mind. It is advisable, and I have learned to do so, to immediately counter such adverse thoughts with constructive emphatic ideas, ways and means of avoiding the probable causes.

Making predictions about probable events in the lives of others which are adverse, should be avoided, the exception being if you likewise explain or suggest to the other what should be done to ameliorate such an effect. When you seriously think of another person, there is a great possibility, as we know, that you may be unwittingly projecting to the consciousness of that person if they are in a *passive state*. You may reach their mind with a suggestion and idea, which in itself may not be harmful, but the idea may become a cause that will motivate them to act in a manner so as to bring about the prediction you have in mind. Vocative predictions, those spoken in the presence of another, about the life of that person and which are adverse, are especially detrimental. They may subjectively establish a haunting fear, a fear which by fascination draws a person to such environments or circumstances out of which the prediction may materialize.

Most of us are aware of our weaknesses, whether we will admit them to others or not. We do, however, like to think that in some way we are overcoming them. Many of these foibles we push into the background of our consciousness because they are not pleasant to think about. We do not master them but merely inhibit them. At least we are keeping them innocuous. When someone enumerates or delineates these weaknesses, tells us of the dangers of them, it constitutes a challenge to us. We want to know, for our own satisfaction, whether or not they are wrong. We want to know if we are master of the weakness of which they spoke, or if it really is acquiring a control over us. We, therefore, bring the weakness to the fore in our consciousness, to review it and see whether or not we can suppress it at will. If we do suppress it we are that much stronger because of the confidence gained

from the experience. However, if we are not able to suppress the weakness, it gains greater control over our will and eventually it becomes a strong cause of the very thing that was predicted for it.

When you predict, make your predictions constructive. If you are aware of a series of adverse circumstances developing out of existing causes, and you must warn others, also suggest a remedy for these causes or do not predict at all.—X

Where Is Cosmic Consciousness?

Most questions which are contained in these FORUM discussions are the result of correspondence from members commenting upon their own progress or asking for fuller explanation upon points which may be indefinitely understood by them. Sometimes, as in the case of the above question, the question is inferred rather than stated. The reference is made by a Frater in Australia to the state of Cosmic Consciousness as being something away from the individual as if it were a state or condition existing somewhere in space or at least outside of us.

This conception is due to a misunderstanding of terminology. Repeatedly we have tried to emphasize in these *Forum articles* and in the monographs themselves that matters concerning the subjects of Rosicrucianism and psychic development are sometimes difficult to convey in terms of the words and definitions upon which we have decided. It must always be borne in mind by every student that there is considerable difficulty in making language express ideas which are outside the realm of objective experience. Language is a tool which man has developed to assist him in his general adjustment to his surroundings. Language is not necessarily a God-given thing—rather, it is the result of man's intelligence and ingenuity to avail himself of the use of voice or sound which he is able to produce. After all, language is no more than a certain arrangement of vocal sounds. Some words, in fact, in many languages, are representative in their sounds of the things for which they stand. Most of the language that we use every day is symbolic; that is, the sound with which we produce a word has come to be a symbol to stand for the thing itself. Regardless of the name which we give anything, that name becomes

a symbol, and to speed the gaining of knowledge and adjustment to the affairs of everyday life, we gradually develop the habit of thinking in terms of the language; that is, we substitute the symbol, rather than the thing itself.

Particularly in a rapid conversation, we seldom visualize the thing which we are discussing. Instead we substitute the word which is a symbol. Such a practice has become so habitual that we are hardly aware of it until it is brought to our attention. Therefore, when we attempt to learn anything new we are gradually developing the habit of the use of symbols, until frequently we have words in our vocabulary for which we do not have a clear-cut picture or actual knowledge of the thing itself. For example, almost everyone during recent years has seen or heard frequently the word *radar*. Yet, outside of special technically trained individuals, the vast public which has seen this word and heard of the use of this form of electronics has little idea, other than the word, of exactly what is represented by that word.

We may know in general the purpose and use of radar, but if each of us were to convey either by drawing a picture or describing in intimate detail what our conception of radar was, there would be as many different interpretations as there are individuals, with the exception of the limited few who actually are familiar with this equipment through experience.

We see in this illustration an example of an individual learning to use the symbol—that is, the word—before the thing itself is experienced. A close analysis of our entire vocabulary would amaze us as to how frequently this condition occurs. It is a normal condition because it permits us to gather general knowledge more quickly than if we would go out and analyze and gain a complete visual picture or experience of everything of which we may hear. Therefore, when we begin the study of a subject which has to do with the psychic phase of our lives, we follow this same habit. We begin to accept word-symbols to represent the real thing of which we have had no experience or of which there can be no actual physical demonstration.

Man has a natural desire to have confirmed in experience the symbols which he

has learned in terms of words. That explains the natural curiosity or desire upon the part of each of us to see something of which we have heard, or to have a demonstration to prove the meaning in terms of our experience with the word-symbol which we have adopted to represent it.

The neophyte student of our studies is most anxious for the demonstrations and experiences that will prove the symbols which he has accepted to represent various forms of psychic phenomena, but because he has habitually been thinking of word-symbols in terms of physical things, it becomes a gradual process of development in itself which leads to the realization that many such expressions, such as, soul, psychic, spirit, projection, aura, and many others cannot be translated in terms of a physical phenomenon. Therefore, the accepted symbol—that is, the word representing these concepts—must endure and be the representative of the real thing until consciousness is sufficiently expanded to bring about a clearer realization of this new factor with which we are dealing.

It is probably because of this growing terminology that our Frater was confused in the statement concerning Cosmic consciousness. The term *Cosmic Consciousness* is a symbol, that is, a word-symbol, of a state of consciousness which is considered to be on a higher plane than the consciousness normally evidenced by the human being. It is not in itself a condition or a place into which we can step or move. It is merely a description of a condition toward which we can grow, and the expansion of our knowledge, realization, and experience gradually opens up channels of ability and knowledge which comes to be a broader and more expansive state of consciousness than that which we ordinarily use and to which we have attached the name or word-symbol, *Cosmic Consciousness*. We are helping by coming to an agreement of differences, and possibly one that will help us most is the realization of the meaning of the word *Cosmic*.

In our Rosicrucian teachings, this term is used as an all-inclusive symbol of not only the entire physical universe, but of everything seen and unseen that exists. The Cosmic, then, is almost in a sense synonymous with God, except that we choose to limit the definition of Cosmic to be the composite of all the laws which the Creator has put into

effect and which exist throughout all time and space, to use the familiar comparison. The Cosmic, therefore, constitutes the all-inclusive ordained laws of God which have been made effective to bring about His ultimate purpose.

Our striving as human beings, consciously or unconsciously, is to adjust ourselves to a state of harmony with the functioning of these laws so that we therefore may better fit ourselves into the life which we must now experience and the lives that must be experienced in the future. We strive to understand these laws, and that striving is a part of our development because the laws of God are the final laws of life and of all things we think of. A consciousness that can fully grasp and understand these laws is one which is above the consciousness of man, and so we use the term *Cosmic Consciousness* as being that state to which man can aspire and eventually reach, where he will be in perfect accord and have perfect knowledge of God and His purposes. We cannot expect to arrive there through any one process nor will it always be a sudden gaining of this knowledge, but in most cases, that is, in the lives of each of us, it will come a step at a time, a gradual expanding of consciousness, expanding from our own individual limitations until it reaches out and includes the consciousness of the Cosmic.—A

Does Luck Exist?

A frater in the United States Army, now stationed in Italy, joins our FORUM CIRCLE. He arises to ask: "Is there such a thing as luck? Why do we sometimes continually win in a game while other persons lose, no matter how hard they may try? Also, why is it that some days it seems that everything is against us; for instance, if you are waiting in line for something to be issued, you get the worst, while everyone else gets the best, and so throughout the entire day—or life. I am a member overseas in Italy and seem to be going around puzzled about the world, with many questions on my mind all of the time. This is the first opportunity I have had to submit a question to the FORUM. For my benefit and, of course, to help the FORUM, I will send in others from now on."

The word *luck* is used ordinarily in the sense of one of two meanings. It is either

used in the sense of *good fortune* or *chance*. Between the two uses, however, there lies a vast difference of meaning. Either, fortune is created for us or we do our own creating of it. Those who assume that our fortune lies entirely out of our powers and the circumstances of environment are fatalists. Such individuals presume that external powers or entities may arbitrarily favor an individual or affect him detrimentally. This influence may, in the opinion of some, be ordained in advance of birth, as a prescribed course of living, which is inescapable. Again, others accept it as a fate which is decreed from day to day, or hour to hour. The unthinking and overzealous devotee of astrology is often one of the latter type. He is apt to believe that every favorable incident or unfavorable one is the direct result of an influence upon him from the stars. Luck to him means a fatalistic control of the affairs of his life, regardless of the exercise of his will, or the use of his own powers to create his destiny.

Some students of mysticism have the same attitude toward *karma* or the Cosmic doctrine of Cosmic compensation. They presume that conduct in a previous life has absolutely determined the course of events for this one. Consequently, they are of the opinion that whatever happens to them is karmic, in the sense of being the effect of a cause having occurred in a previous existence. They ignore entirely the minor causes of their *present* living. Such causes may be the accumulated impetus of numerous current acts on their part producing their present plight or advantage. Such, again, is fatalism, and results in a suppression of the individual will and a submitting to circumstances. Let us outrightly deny the existence of a fate which predetermines and fixes the course of human lives and events.

Causes may result in certain effects emphatically following, provided that the causes are not countered or mitigated. The cause, however, carries with it no power that prevents it from being altered by still other more potent causes. For analogy, a ball thrown with a certain velocity will carry a number of feet in one direction, *unless* it is intercepted by a bat, then it will reverse its course and go in the opposite direction. Consequently, the only thing which may make inflexible the course of human life is a sub-

mission on our part to all causes. If we close our mind and submit our will, then we are like a straw in the wind. The wind will determine the fate of the straw, the directions in which it will go. Man can become causative by exerting his thoughts and his will, and can oppose the cause of his environment, even his inherited tendencies, which are also causes. Many men have overcome their heredity and risen above physiological and psychological disadvantages of birth.

Since, however, man is not yet capable of knowing all natural and Cosmic influences, which are causes and to which he is subject, there are many incidents that will surprise and dismay him. Such does not mean that he has been intentionally selected by fate or fortune for the events that follow. It does mean that his exposures to circumstances have been different from others, thus making the difference in the experiences which he has. Since we are often ignorant of these differences which are at times hereditary, they are mystifying and appear as though we are under the aegis of *luck*.

The other sense which is attributed to luck, as said, is *chance*. The believer in chance does not think that the advantages or disadvantages that accrue to him are due to fate or supernatural powers. To him, chance has really a mathematical content. He may admit that the exact formula or series of causes is unknown to him, but often he strives to learn the laws underlying chance so as to direct it in his favor. Chance is related to the law of *probability*. The premise of this law, stated in nontechnical language, is that anything may happen in time. Even the most apparently rigid cycles of recurrence will vary ultimately. The opposite or deviation from a fixed condition or circumstance is bound to occur sometime because the whole universe is subject to change. Further, everything has one or more probable alternatives. And these alternatives recur in every so many thousand, million, billion, or trillion times. Let us look at it in this way. A coin has two different sides, *heads* and *tails*. There are a number of factors which may make it fall "heads up," when tossed into the air. The tails side may be heavier, causing it to plummet toward the earth first because of greater gravitational attraction. The distribution of the weight of the design may cause an unbalancing of the coin so that given the

same, or nearly same toss each time it will land nearly always with the same side up. However, where all such factors are equal, then, according to the law of probability and chance, the coin must land in a given number of tosses as many times with heads up as with tails. Thus, for a homely analogy, in a million of such equal tosses, with equal factors involved, a coin will land heads up a half million times and with tails up the same number of times. This equal number may not be evenly distributed throughout the million tosses. Thus, for example, the coin might land heads up successively for a number of times without once appearing tails up. Then after a great number of tosses a series of tails up would occur.

Frequently an individual encounters a series of the alternate actions, like a number of heads up of a coin in succession. To him it may seem that luck favors him. Actually he has just encountered an aspect of the law of probability. The common or positive way of referring to this law is to call it the *law of averages*. The person who chances a circumstance hopes that the change he wishes may occur just at the time he wants it. In other words, he gambles with this law of probability. Gamblers at the Casino at Monte Carlo, who "play" the roulette wheel have striven for years to work out mathematical equations based on the law of probability. They hope to determine in just what number of plays a number or combination of numbers *must* recur. In fact, it has been related that once or twice in the history of that institution an individual has been able to work out such equations with great success.

This law of probability accounts for some individuals being lucky on certain days in some game when each play will, for a number of plays, occur in their favor, making them the winner. Of course, in some instances the *thoughts* of the individual can and do influence circumstances to their favor, even though they may not realize it. A group of men may be seated, waiting to be called by an official seated before them at a desk to fill a limited number of positions. The concentration of one may compel the man at the desk to look in his direction and to be inclined to point to him to arise before others. The man so selected may be unaware that his intense thought caused it. He may consider himself as but "lucky." The fact

is, some of us can and do release our thoughts more easily than others, and we are quite unconscious of it.

Notwithstanding, then, the mysterious circumstances which sometimes seem to surround the so-called lucky person, there is no such condition as luck. We repeat, unrealized causes and the law of probability contribute to those circumstances which are called lucky. We often experience a series of unfavorable events of a minor nature, all occurring in one day. We then say that nothing is right today. Such is sometimes caused by psychological and physiological conditions. We are nervous and more tense than usual. Consequently we move quickly and not cautiously. Thus we knock things over, spill things on the table, drop objects, or we forget things easier. All such circumstances provoke or become causes of still other aggravating events, until eventually the unthinking person is certain that the day augured bad luck for him.—X

Ascension of the Body

A Soror of Washington, D. C., addresses our FORUM. She says: "Will you please express the views of the Order relative to the ascension of the body. From what I have read elsewhere, it seems to me that the chief aim is to raise the vibrations of the body so that it may be taken with one through the change called death. I know that we also desire to raise the vibrations of the body, but, as Rosicrucians, only in order to become more responsive to the higher vibrations around us—to reach at-one-ment. On the Cosmic plane, as I understand it, forms are not necessary—in fact, forms do not even exist in nature, so what would be the use in striving for ascension of the body, even if it were possible?"

The concept of the ascension of the body is a very ancient one. It is not confined to any one people, religion, or philosophy. In fact, the idea of ascension is psychologically associated with the same principle or reasoning as the belief in revelation. The doctrine of revelation presupposes the possibility of a movement from heaven earthward. Revelation anticipates Divine Intelligence reaching down to the mind of man. It is a movement of Divine ideas to the consciousness or understanding of man. Ascension presupposes the

possibility of movement from the earth heavenward. In antiquity, particularly before the Cosmological theories of Copernicus, the earth was presumed to be the center of the universe. As gods or spiritual properties were thought to transcend man and earth, they were therefore conceived as being located in the heavens *above* the earth. It was not realized by early men that what they considered above the earth might relatively be below, to persons living in the polar region, for example. However, a spiritual ascent of man meant to them the movement of the body of man upward to the heavenly regions. The idea of attributing the direction of *up* to spiritual and moral properties is reflected in the custom of calling noble ideals high and lofty. Conversely, material ambitions are considered as low and earthly.

A distinction, not always clear in the past, must be made between the theological meaning of *assumption* and *ascension*. Assumption is the belief in bodily translation to a heaven so that an individual may be informed of spiritual truths. The body is thought to return later again to earth. In other words, according to ancient traditions and exegetical explanation, a human was temporarily transported in the physical to the heavens where he might become cognizant of certain spiritual truths. After the noetic experience, he was then returned to the mortal plane. This must not be construed in the mystical or allegorical sense of the raising of the consciousness to a plane of spiritual understanding. To the theologian, it was the actual going up into the heavens, just as "The Arabian Nights" tales relate man riding into the heavens on a magic carpet. It was believed that the individual, while in his physical state, assumed a brief period of residence in the spiritual world, just as one would go from the basement to the roof of a building by elevator, so as to get a temporarily enlarged vista of his surroundings. After his experience on the roof, he would come down again to the basement.

In the testament of Abraham, we are told that the angel Michael takes Abraham up in a cloud with angelic chariots to show him the world of men, from the viewpoint of the heavens. Again, in the "ascension" of Isaiah, (Chapters 7 and 8), he is raised to the *Seventh Heaven*, and has a vision of the Beloved. Subsequently he returns to earth.

Mohammedan literature relates that the Prophet (Mohammed) was transported at night from Mecca to Jerusalem, and thence through the Seventh Heaven to the presence of God. Later he was transported back to Mecca. These are but a few of the many assumptions, and are not representative of the meaning of ascension.

From the Christian theological point of view, Christ's *ascension* was a resumption of His former state. Christ was not being transported to heaven to experience the Divine state or for the noetic experience or spiritual knowledge, but to return to His original status. It was in reality, from this point of view, a reabsorption of Christ's consciousness in the Universal Consciousness, an indwelling in God again. Even though Christian theology relates that the tomb was empty and Christ in form was seen to ascend, it is contended that it was a *spiritualized* body which ascended. The attempt is made to explain that after the resurrection the body of Christ was not of the same composition as that of mortals. It was spiritualized, or, in other words, a psychic body which conformed in appearance to the physical one which ascended. This would make Christ's body a kind of apparition, on the occasion of the ascension, yet having more the realism and appearance of a physical one than an ordinary apparition.

In this explanation, we find the desperate attempt of Christianity to distinguish between Hebraic and so-called pagan assumptions into heaven, and the traditional accounts of Christ's Ascension. Since the theologians wished to distinguish Christ's Ascension from an assumption, it became necessary for them to account for the purported appearance of Christ in image or form as having been seen to ascend. To do this, it became essential to declare that Christ's body was "spiritualized," namely, that it was a kind of ethereal substance which could be seen, and yet was not mortal.

In true mysticism, no such cumbersome adjustment of values is needed. Assumption has a meaning to the mystic quite apart from the one the theologians assign it. Likewise, to the mystic, ascension does not mean a raising up of the body to another realm. The mystic, like the mundane scientist, recognizes the body as quite corporeal. Its elements belong to the earth and upon transition these

elements are not sublimated or transmuted into any other substance. They return to their simple electronic state, or to the simple chemical elements, again to assume new arrangements, which, to the human consciousness, appear as physical forms. Thus a dissolved human body might contribute chemically and materially to some other earthly substance, such as plants, minerals, gases, et cetera.

The ascension which the mystic strives for is the elevation of the mortal consciousness. He seeks to wed his mortal mind with the all-pervading spiritual consciousness. To him, the inner consciousness of man is at all times one with the all-pervading Consciousness of God. But this must be objectively realized. We must experience the ecstatic state of our union with the Divine for spiritual joy, just as we experience the perfume of a flower or the sweetness of a fruit. The mystic knows that his ascension requires an introversion, an introspection of consciousness. He must turn in the consciousness of the objective mind and perceive the exalted consciousness of God, or the soul within. He can bring about this unity of the objective consciousness and the inner one only by raising or ascending the objective. This ascending consists of holding in mind those thoughts or ideals which may produce or stimulate certain emotional states and psychic conditions by which the two aspects of consciousness, the objective and the spiritual, are wedded. The mystic calls this an ascension of consciousness because relatively he is *lifting* the mortal consciousness from its limited plane to the infinite one of union with the inner consciousness. When ascension of consciousness is attained, one experiences what is mystically known as *Cosmic Consciousness*.

This whole practice has likewise often been alluded to in mystical literature as *ascending the mountain*, the mountain peak being the moment of attainment of unity with the Cosmic Consciousness. The struggle of the objective consciousness to reach that state was likened to the rigors of climbing a mountain, by which one acquires a greater view.

Any school of thought or a philosophy which teaches ascension of the body is ignorantly perverting mystical precepts, or, rather, ideals into a superstition and an im-

possible practice. The most we can do for the body is to maintain its equilibrium or harmonium, namely, to acquire for it *good health*. When the body is healthy, the greatest contribution it then offers to the spiritual attainments of man is to provide less resistance to, for example, the ascension of the consciousness. Spiritually and mentally man is not what the body is, but what his realization may be. What makes man the creature he is is not his body, but his consciousness and his intellect. Consequently, it is the state of awareness that must be evolved spiritually, not the physical form. As the Soror has pointed out, Cosmically form and material substance, as man knows them, are nonexistent anyway.—X

Gaining Insight

A frater from New Zealand arises in our FORUM to say: "Here is a question which may be of interest to other members, and which I have not seen discussed in the Forum. As I have progressed in my Rosicrucian studies and so have been able to live more up to my ideals, I find that my friends, both young and old, and members of my family who do not belong to the Order are also bettering their natures. Now, is this due to my thoughts affecting theirs, or, as stated a while back in the *Digest*, is life now entering a cycle of greater spirituality and that what I have noticed is due to this? Or is it that through the practice of the exercises, I can now see more of their inner selves, as it were? Do the other members experience this too?"

First, let me assure the frater that other members have had experiences similar to his own. The apparent improvement in the personality or spiritual qualities of those with whom a member associates is more often relative than actual. If there is an actual influence brought to bear upon friends or members of the family because of one's Rosicrucian thinking or practices, it results in a positive action. In other words, those who are affected inquire about the Rosicrucian philosophy. They evidence interest in the teachings. They are conscious of the transition in their own thinking and conduct, and consciously want to share in the source of influence, by becoming members. When, however, a Rosicrucian member, as this

frater, observes what he believes to be beneficial changes in the personalities of those with whom he associates without such persons requesting membership, it indicates that such changes are just relative to his own new, enlarged viewpoint.

An interest which we acquire makes us conscious of all things which are related to it. Whenever we experience anything which participates in the nature of our own interests, we immediately respond to it. A photography enthusiast would have his attention immediately drawn to an advertisement in a magazine concerning a new camera or film that would perhaps be not even noticed by someone else. If there are two or three pages in the periodical containing advertisements of photographic equipment which particularly interest a reader, he may presume that the magazine is dominated by such advertisements. This presumption is because his attention is focused principally upon such advertisements and he recalls them more easily.

The study of the Rosicrucian principles and philosophy makes the student conscious of certain human characteristics or qualities of which he was either not aware as existing or with which he was formerly unconcerned. Gradually, therefore, the persons around him seem to display traits which parallel the subjects of his studies. As he comes to learn of the mistakes of his own habits, he likewise discovers them in his associates, or to his surprise he might find that his associates never did possess them. Further, as a Rosicrucian member develops his own *psychic perception* and is able to perceive that subtle emanation from the human, known as the *aura*, he is able to observe the aura of many of his friends. He may be surprised to see how well developed the auras of some persons are who are not Rosicrucians. Then he becomes not certain whether such is the result of his own influence upon them, or whether they always had such auras. Also, often members of his family made statements regarding experiences or fundamental principles of living which did not interest him or at least were not understood by him. With the broadening of his own views, the result of his Rosicrucian studies, these remarks of his family finally become comprehensive. He finds them to have a deep philosophical content. Again, he wonders, are they saying

these things because of my thoughts upon these subjects—are they being influenced by them? The answer in most instances must be *no*. They have perhaps always said them, but their import was not realized. With the expansion of the inner consciousness of the individual, with the new knowledge he is acquiring as a Rosicrucian, and the greater sensitivity which he has, his vista is increased. The student begins to see and hear in his own environment many things which were once meaningless to him.

A man with deficient eyesight, for analogy, would not observe many beauties of nature along the country roadside. He would perhaps not see the patch of wild flowers in the adjoining field. He might not see the robin on the overhanging bough of the tree, or the lazy, floating white clouds in mysterious formations in the azure sky. Suddenly, given glasses, his world would be transformed. Many formerly undiscerned things would rush in upon it. He might believe that with the acquiring of eyeglasses the world had suddenly been changed and had been influenced by his wearing of them. Actually, however, such things in their basic nature were always there ready to be realized by his consciousness, as soon as his vision was capable of perceiving them. So, too, with *mystical insight* which comes not just from study but from practice and experimentation, the beauty of the inner nature of many persons around us becomes perceived. We have not changed these people. We have, however, attuned ourselves to what they really are.—X

The Mystical Constitution

What are the characteristics of a mystic? Is a person with a mystical point of view any different from any other individual in the commonly accepted sense? These are questions which are asked both by the inquirer on the outside and by the student aspiring to become proficient in the studies of mysticism.

There seems to be a general idea that a mystic-minded individual is something entirely different from the individual possessing what we might call the normal constitution. We speak of the constitution of an individual as referring to his general psychological make-up when we use the word in reference to mental rather than physical states. Under such circumstances, then, the constitution of

man from the psychological standpoint would be the sum total of his personality traits and character. If an individual's ideas are founded primarily upon the possession of material things, then his general constitution and mental outlook is devoted toward the acquiring of these things. If, on the other hand, his philosophy is idealistic and he seeks to know and understand to the fullest extent of his abilities the purpose of the world, and attempts to live a life which is contributing to the general welfare of mankind, his total constitution mentally reflects this viewpoint.

We also are familiar with the use of this word in reference to subnormal and abnormal conditions. Psychologists refer to the unadjusted individual, in some cases, as possessing a neurotic constitution. There is no reason to believe, however, that it is necessary for the mystic-minded person to be anti-social or in any way stand out in his behavior from that of the so-called normal person. Nevertheless, those who have apparently advanced to planes of high mystical knowledge have been such extreme individualists as to stand out among their fellow men. They were recognized by their contemporaries as being different in some manner from so-called normal individuals and are represented in history as possibly being ahead of their times due to the fact that their perspective and viewpoints were in advance of the everyday thinking of the majority of people.

To this extent we will qualify the interpretation of the mystical constitution and acknowledge that the individual who aspires to mystical enlightenment will, in all probability, be more individualistic than the one who purposely or by merely following the crowd, conforms to all accepted standards of the society in which he lives. In other words, if a person has a vision beyond that of the immediate demands of his environment, he is going to be somewhat different. The question, however, as to whether or not this difference can be considered as a trait to cause him to be separated from the society of which he is a part is one which has been overestimated, because after all, who can determine what the highest aims and purposes of society should be? Possibly there is such an individualistic attitude that more truly represents the real purpose of life—it is the individual

who is able to lead others and to be outstanding among men.

The mystic or the one who aspires to be a mystic is he who truly understands the meaning of mysticism. Mysticism can be defined as the doctrine or the idea that we are able to obtain direct knowledge of God, of truth and the Cosmic scheme through insight or intuition in a manner different from ordinary sense perception. It is obvious that most of us in everyday life seem to direct our lives on the premise that our knowledge is obtained from what we perceive. All of us will further acknowledge that we modify our perceptions by our own reason, but it is a comparative few who go so far as to state that knowledge of even more importance than that which our sense faculties can convey to us is obtainable by a closer and more direct relationship with God Himself.

Those who have lived in a state of high mystical understanding and knowledge have been those who seemingly have been able to transcend the material limitations which most of us must face in our daily circumstances. This does not mean that they have all solved the problems of the physical universe and neither does it mean that they have necessarily been able to control all the problems which is the lot of man to deal with from one incarnation to another, but it does definitely mean that these individuals, with the enlightenment of knowledge which has become theirs through a source or channel higher than that of physical perception, have, by this knowledge, been able to raise themselves above the limitations of the physical universe in which they find themselves placed.

The purpose of life may not necessarily be exclusively in the controlling of the physical factors about us. It is more possible that a closer realization of ultimate purpose comes through realizing that the true realities and the true values for which man must seek lie outside the realm of the physical and must be built up and understood in such manner that will cause them to take their true place in the scheme of things. For example, we know there are many things which it is worth while to possess, insofar as making an adjustment to the physical world reasonably possible is concerned. Among these things that help us to live adequately in the society of the present day are food, clothing, means

of transportation, a certain amount of material wealth, and so forth. These things we say are desirable because they have utility value in helping us to live in the environment in which we are placed. While it is true that some individuals give more consideration to the acquisition and possession of these things, anyone with a logical mind and a vision beyond the circumstances of immediate environment will realize that these are not ultimate and final values. They realize these things just for what they are—means to an end; that is, means of living adequately or reasonably within the physical universe of which they are a part.

So it is that regardless of their ultimate philosophy, we need not refuse to use those steps or things that will help us, but it is even more true from the standpoint of an eventual gaining of the ends and ideals in life to which we aspire, that true reality and value, which we as potential mystics can see lie outside the limitations of a physical universe, are the things toward which our true aspirations and efforts should be directed. This is neither the time nor place to go into the analyzation of the techniques of gaining the mystical constitution. The Rosicrucian teachings provide the key to that process. It is through the acquisition of knowledge and the practice of techniques given therein that we gain the ability to broaden our concepts, to cultivate our intuitive abilities, and by so doing, gradually reach a state where we are not dependent wholly upon the knowledge of our sense faculties and all that we know. This is not an easy task and must be approached in humbleness and sincerity. We cannot approach these teachings with the idea of merely being able to prove to ourselves that mystical knowledge is obtainable or possible. We must approach it in this sincere desire to utilize for the benefit of mankind and ourselves the accomplishments which we may hope to attain.

The final expression of the mystical constitution from the standpoint of individuals will vary. Just as all men differ from each other in many ways, so each individual expression of any knowledge which they may acquire will differ. The expression of mystical knowledge or a state of mystical union which may be obtained by any individual will bring about an expression in terms of his general individuality and personality. In

other words, the mystical constitution will be reflected through the character that already exists, although the character will be subject to modification. One criterion, however, of the mystical constitution is that the individual acquiring it will attempt to adjust himself to environment. He will be aware, probably more keenly than anyone else, of the fact that more can be accomplished by conforming in degree with the society in which he must work than can be by forcibly making himself stand out from the crowd. This does not mean that such an individual will compromise his purposes and convictions in order to appear like other human beings, but that he will use the society of which he is a part as a means of expression in order that it will help others.

A true mystical experience will not be questioned by the individual because such event is specific beyond a shadow of a doubt. As long as an individual wonders whether or not he has a mystical or psychic experience, he can be sure that his lack in development is yet considerable because once the experience and the understanding that comes through it has been established as fact, there will be no doubt. It can clearly be distinguished from day-dreaming or a mere continuance of idle hope and idle thinking. Mystical expression will radiate through the attitude in mind of those who understand the experience. It will indicate sound judgment and good living based upon true values, and, on the other hand, the mystic-minded individual or the possessor of the mystical constitution will realize that mystic expression abhors personal gain, honor, and glory for their own sake. The mystical constitution especially does not find expression in vain glory or egoism, but rather in humbleness and submissiveness. The mystical constitution, therefore, expresses itself through a radiation of the assurance of God and His Cosmic laws as manifesting in the depth of knowledge and wisdom, and by the disciple who manifests his knowledge in humbleness or service.—A

A Concept of God

It is very difficult to answer a question directly as to what is the Rosicrucian concept of God. While there are general concepts and explanations we can make that are in accordance with the Rosicrucian teachings,

there still remains the fact that the concept of God is not only a result of knowledge but a result of individual experience. The concept of God held by the savage or completely uncivilized individual as compared with a bishop or even a layman today is obviously entirely different, but the experience of these individuals may be somewhat related in that each of the men, uncivilized and civilized, may find satisfaction in his understanding and experience of God. They may both worship and respect their Creator, but neither would recognize the other's concept as being that of deity.

It is hard for us to conceive of a God who is all-powerful and infinite as being so distinctly different as these two extreme concepts would be; and furthermore, we know that if it were analyzed down to every individual then we would have evidences of as many different concepts of God as there are human minds to conceive them. This is not necessarily a belittling of God, nor is it in any way an understanding that will detract from the concept of deity, because it shows that God is greater than any individual concept. While none of us in our present state, regardless of how advanced we may be, can completely know and conceive God, it does show that regardless of man's development or his understanding there is a part of God that he can know, and through this knowledge he can gain understanding, solace, and the satisfaction that to the best of his ability he is in conformance with the Cosmic scheme.

Normally we consider God as being infinite in substance and attribute, and yet in spite of this consideration we constantly think of some of God's attributes as being similar to that of man. In reality, since man can interpret God so differently, it is obvious that God must not be limited in any respect to any of the characteristics of man. God is like a system of mathematics in his manifestation in that his actions and being are in accordance with established laws, these laws being a manifestation of his own intelligence.

Even the most elementary knowledge of mathematics causes us to realize that the laws of mathematics are established and permanent. I believe most of us will remember that we are taught that the sum of the angles of a triangle, regardless of the size and shape of a triangle, is always equal to two right angles or 180 degrees. We might

ask—since when did the sum of the three angles of the triangle begin to equal 180 degrees? Upon reflection, we know that such a question has no meaning; in fact, it makes nonsense, because the principles of mathematics are timeless and eternal and did not have a beginning nor can they have an end insofar as we can comprehend it. So we can analyze the laws of God—they did not begin nor will they end. They are and will continue to be. We can conceive, however, of God being the fundamental cause of the universe. He is the cause in the sense that He Himself is manifest in part through the universe. Consequently, God is both substance and mind. As substance, He causes all that is perceived to be; as mind He is the working of the laws that maintain the function of the universe and carry it toward its eventual end.

God, therefore, might be said to possess consciousness, and He must find what we could describe as intellectual pleasure in the logic and mathematics of His own perfection. Probably the great philosopher Spinoza had this in mind when he said that "God loves Himself." However, other attributes well known to man cannot be assigned to God in any logical way, for God being perfect and all-inclusive cannot have emotions and passions such as those which affect us, because we are affected by things external to us. In other words, it is usually an external stimulation that sets off our emotional reactions, but for God there is nothing external to affect Him as He is all, and being *all* there can be nothing for Him to desire, and in the human concept of purposes and plans God cannot have purposes and plans that He may wish to carry out. Neither would He require *will*, since all that is done by Him is done as a part of His own manifestation.

Man is possessed with the ability to reason. He uses this ability in order to gain knowledge, or rather, to discover that which is not already known to him. God, who knows all, and since there is no *unknown* for Him to look forward to, has no need to reason; and therefore, being knowledge and wisdom, He would not need an intellect in the human sense. For God, also, there could be no moral value. We call those things good which we desire, and all things bad which cause us difficulties or for which we may have an aversion. God cannot desire or have aversions

since all things are Himself. Moral value and the question of good and evil become nonexistent in the mind of God, because these are only inadequate human values and cannot be characteristic of God as He really is.

It becomes more and more obvious that the purpose of man is mainly to come to know God, to learn of the operations of His laws and purposes in order that we can work in conformity with them. It is not logical for us to think of God having created anything purely for the benefit of man, or much less for God to set aside His laws on behalf of any individual. As man is a part of all things, so he is a part of God, and God being infinite wisdom would not create or attempt to modify laws which He has established for His own sake. As God is infinitely wise, He could not change His laws because that would acknowledge that laws were not made from a source of infinite wisdom in the first place or they would have been perfect from the beginning.

Man, therefore, cannot logically look to God for relief from the problems which are for him to solve, but he can look to God for the understanding of God Himself which will help him better to understand the individual nature of his own being, which, after all, is a part of God.—A

Other Organizations

A question was asked at the local FORUM of the AMORC Thomas Jefferson Chapter in Washington, D. C., which I believe is worthy of our consideration in this FORUM. The question is: "What are the dangers as well as the benefits that may be experienced by the Rosicrucian student who delves into various fields of knowledge aside from his Rosicrucian studies?"

Any organization or society which attempts to restrict, to limit, or to confine the interests of its members is certainly not contributing to the general knowledge, intellectual and spiritual development, if you will, of its members. I believe that the Rosicrucian Order expounds one of the most all-inclusive systems of philosophy available today for the betterment of the individual. Rosicrucianism is not alone confined to mysticism and mystical concepts. It also delves into the various basic sciences sufficiently to teach an appreciation of the natural world and man's relation to it. It concerns itself

with the problem of morals and ethics. It likewise concerns itself with health and with self-improvement from a number of different aspects. It further concerns itself with world problems and purposes. Notwithstanding this extensive nature of the Rosicrucian teachings and philosophy, we would never claim that further knowledge, or amplification in part at least of what we teach, could not be acquired through some other channels. For example, we are not strictly a scientific organization, although as I have said our teachings include science, enough to unite our philosophy and give it balance. However, the member who is desirous of a more extensive study in science could, in a course at our Rose-Croix University, or some place else, acquire more knowledge of science than what we have in our teachings, or what we would want to include.

For these reasons, therefore, we have adopted a policy, a very *liberal* one. We do not object to or prohibit the affiliation of an individual because of his other affiliations, so long as these other affiliations are legal, morally circumspect, and do not interfere with his progress as an individual or as a member of AMORC.

There are a great number of organizations which style themselves occult, mystical, and metaphysical. There are dozens of them, some of them fairly large insofar as their material appearances are concerned. Others are, figuratively speaking, carried around in the hatband of their particular leader. The great majority of them, regardless of the Cosmic and all-inclusive nature of their names, are actually the products, the personal developments of a single individual. In other words, five, ten, or fifteen years ago such organizations did not exist in this country or in *any* other country. A real student of mysticism, metaphysics, and philosophy can immediately tell, regardless of the glamorous names which they have coined, from an examination of their literature and their teachings, that they are highly syncretic, that is, that they have been borrowed from authentic, traditional and contemporary organizations—or to use more common phraseology, that they have "lifted" their teachings or ideas from theosophy, Christian Science, New Thought, popular occult books, and *always*, of course, something from the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC. Then, the par-

ticular leader shakes the whole concoction, pours it into a mold of his own liking and declares it something new and inspirational; whereas, the only thing new about it is the name.

Now, obviously, such so-called teachings are *dangerous* to the student, for the simple reason that such teachings have no thread of continuity. They could not have because they have been borrowed from this, from that, and from everything else. There is no logical connection of conclusions. Furthermore, the student immediately, when he affiliates with them, is dwelling under a cloud of perfidy. He is being deceived. Oftentimes he is being led to believe that what he is receiving is a descent, a pure descent from ancient teachings. If the average man and woman were not so naive they would question into the origin of such organizations; they would try to find something in encyclopedias or dictionaries about them. Not being able to find such references, they would demand, before their affiliation, some *prima facie* evidence of their connection with antiquity. If such was not forthcoming, and the leader admitted that it all was his own presentation, in all probability the average person would not then affiliate. He would take the position that his own ideas and his own thinking were certainly as acceptable and had as much weight and authority as some other person's who was also not an authority.

The fact of the matter is that unfortunately persons do not investigate. And so, in addition to having membership in AMORC, they are seduced, shall we say, into such other teachings. Ultimately we know the result—*confusion*. The first effect is that they no longer get any benefit out of their Rosicrucian teachings. All of the benefits that have accrued are dissipated, because the statements given in these other teachings are so different and so controversial that the student begins to be confused as to who is right and who is wrong. It is for this very reason that we say in our Rosicrucian monographs that after having become a member of AMORC, before you associate yourself with any other organization purporting to expound mystical or philosophical teachings, at least study well into the early Temple Degrees of AMORC so that you are thoroughly conversant with the teachings of the Rosi-

crucian Order and with its principles and logical presentation. Then later if you find that which, in your opinion, excels them, and is more beneficial, retire from AMORC. You are free to do so.

We know that if a member does this, he will be convinced that he is on the right path when he is in AMORC. And why not? An organization which is as world-wide as AMORC and which has the actual and traditional history which AMORC has, and which is affiliated with the authentic esoteric orders of Europe and which traces its lineage back for centuries, naturally must have access to every source of knowledge, research, mystical and other information that is necessary for its students. In AMORC you have access, not to the opinions of one man or two men, but to archives of Orders which have included many of the great minds over the centuries. It would, therefore, take a very unique and a very exceptional organization that could have access to a greater source of material than that of AMORC.

Before a person becomes a member of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, or any mystical or philosophical organization, in fact, he should have some idea of the direction in which he wants to go. A person who goes shopping, if he is going shopping intelligently, usually has in mind a pretty general idea of what he wants. Then he goes into one store after another to try and find the merchandise that more nearly approaches his desire. The person who just wanders from shop to shop, not knowing what he wants and buys something indiscriminately, is apt to find, while walking home with his package under his arm, something in another show window, which he would like better. He discovers that he has wasted time and money. So, therefore, if you feel you know what you want, that you want to know more about yourself, about the Cosmos, and about your relationship thereto and that you want to master life, rid yourself of fears and superstitions, and have that peace of mind which comes from self-confidence, and you turn to AMORC and you find it therein, what would be the reason in going elsewhere? A horse cannot go in two directions at the same time. You either find in AMORC what you want or you do not. If you find what you want in AMORC, it is ridiculous to confuse yourself by shopping about. We say the same for

those who are affiliated with the other organizations, whatever they may be. If a person finds in them what he wants, he should not shop about and confuse himself.

Of course, there is always the individual who is hunting for the "*short cut*." He is certain that the multitude may have to labor long, study, be tested and tried before they are found worthy to receive that illumination which makes for mastery in life. For themselves, however, such individuals believe that there is some quick way whereby they will not have to study or have to practice, and in "six easy lessons" the wealth of wisdom of the Cosmic Masters will be theirs. Such individuals, because of their gullibility are marked as *victims* for every charlatan traveling about the country. These persons actually pay large sums in private classes to someone who is going to give them a short cut in "six easy lessons." Only after the "teacher" is gone, and their money as well, do they yearn that there is no *short cut*.

Development means a gradual change from one condition into another. There is no spontaneous change mystically. From each hour of mystical preparation and development, we derive some satisfaction and benefit. It is not like one's having to wait years while one studies, before ultimately deriving some satisfaction. Each year of preparation and study brings an increasing realization of success and accomplishment. So the years that you study are not wasted. We may liken them to climbing a flight of stairs. The top step is the highest point of attainment, but each step you take to reach that top, even though it is an effort in itself, lifts you just a little higher and gives you a different vista. You realize with each step you take that you are climbing. You do not have to wait until you get to the top step to have that realization.

Every school of real mysticism and true philosophy teaches that *time* and *space* are only illusions of the human objective mind, due to its limitations and that they do not exist Cosmically. Consequently, there is not in the Cosmic sense any short cut, any time-saver, because the Cosmic does not need to save that which is not. The man who wants to save time in his mystical studies is the man who is not mystically inclined. He is trying to evaluate a mystical process by a material illusion, namely, time.

So we say, in conclusion, if what you find in AMORC corresponds to what you want to gain, then, until you at least are well grounded in the teachings and works of the Order, do not enter into the studies of other organizations. It would only mean a confusion of terminology, by which you would not be able to do justice either to AMORC or to the work of any other organization.—X

How Does the Soul-Personality Develop?

A Soror of California asks our FORUM: "Does the soul-personality usually develop along one line? For example, does one begin to express himself in music or art and continue in that art from one incarnation to another until he reaches a high degree of perfection in it, and neglect the sciences and poetry? Or does he develop in just one, then the other, until after many incarnations he has a perfect personality and is very versatile and quite a master of all of the arts and sciences?"

The soror's question reminds me of Oriental bazaars I have visited in Egypt, Iraq, and lands of the Near East. The further one deviates from the beaten path in his travels in those lands, the more primitive and true to ancient customs are the bazaars. In Baghdad, for instance, the bazaars are not mere places for the sale of native merchandise, but are centers of manufacture as well. As in antiquity, there are no wholesalers or jobbers for the products. The customers walk through alley-like arcades, with canopied tops reaching from one side of the street to the other, to keep off the torrid sun's rays. On either side of the street are cubicles or stall-like rooms completely open at the front. They are barely high enough for a man to stand in. Most of them would only accommodate from two to three men. In these are seated or standing the craftsmen plying their various trades. The objects they produce are piled high in front of them for inspection of the passing throng who barter in raucous voices for the commodities.

I have stood by the hour before different of these craftsmen who were working in metal, principally in copper and brass. The dust kicked up by the shuffling feet would settle down on anyone who stood about. Perspiration would be running down one's face,

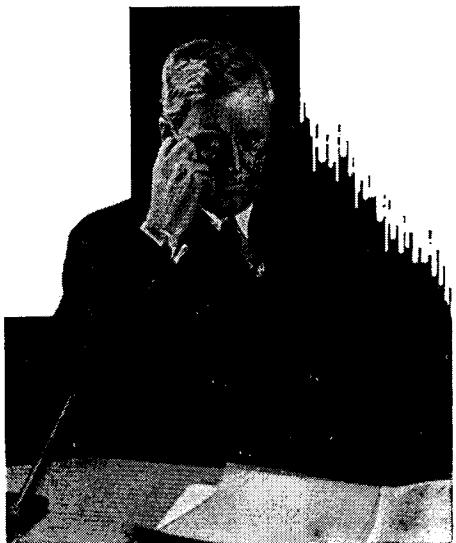
from the stifling heat and lack of air. Flies, large and sticky, crawled over one's hands and neck, which fact did not trouble the natives swathed in their native garments. I would watch the craftsman with his crude-looking hammer, skillfully beating a heavy sheet of heated soft copper into a large utensil for carrying water. As I saw him dexterously turn the vessel and strike it here and then there, I knew I was watching the same type of craftsmanship as was done centuries before the time of Christ. But besides the historic interest, there is also an object lesson to be gained. To perfect the shape of the utensil, the workman never continuously struck the copper sheet more than a few times in exactly the same place. First he would strike it on one side and then on another. Then he would concentrate heavy blows in one place, using a large hammer, and then a series of quick, light blows on the opposite side. To have continuously struck the copper sheet in one place would have distorted its shape. All sections of the copper sheet had to be hammered, some more than others, so that the whole would assume the form the craftsman had in mind.

So it is with the soul-personality. No personality could truly attain perfection—namely, a sensitivity to the fullness of the soul—if it were developed along one line only. The person who is inclined to science, who is very analytical and logical, is developing just one aspect of his personality. It brings him a particular appreciation of the Divine within himself and in nature, whether he realizes it or not. The personality who develops his esthetic qualities and pursues an ideal of beauty is making himself sensitive to still other aspects of the soul. It requires all of these varied responses to completely fashion the *perfect* personality, one which the world would claim as being amazingly versatile and understanding.

You have seen persons who were master musicians, but who likewise were helpless in even the administration of their own simple personal affairs. I remember traveling by plane to a foreign country with a renowned musical celebrity. He was an outstanding concert violinist, and he was on a tour of the capitals of South America. His name is known to all Americans and to persons interested in cultural things throughout the world. He has played on many national

radio broadcast programs. He might be styled a genius in music, yet the man was very *impractical*. If it were not for the aid of his practical-minded wife, who accompanied him, he would have been greatly confused by the simplicities of presenting a passport, claiming his baggage, and even, it seemed, knowing just when and where to get on board the plane. Such persons as a rule lack even the most ordinary mechanical sense, so that the workings of nature's laws, other than in music, are often the deepest mystery to them. You admire them for their music, but you could not call them a balanced or well-rounded soul-personality. In their lives, for analogy, they would be like a copper vessel which had been struck in one place continuously by the craftsman. Such persons need other incarnations to round out the perfection of their personalities.

It is quite true that a soul-personality may have a keen interest in painting or music, for example, for two or three incarnations in succession. Such is only to complete that aspect of the soul-personality. Again, it is like the craftsman in Baghdad who struck the copper vessel several times in one place with the hammer before turning it to another side to fashion it there. After such a soul-personality has become sufficiently appreciative of that harmony of the soul which is realized through music and the arts, it then becomes interested in perhaps science, oratory, literature, and so on. Just as the copper vessel has a bottom, top, and sides, so man has many attributes of his being. All of these attributes must be brought into relation to each other for the perfection of the soul-personality. The extreme intellectualist must at some time also become an emotionalist. He must experience as well the feelings of the esthete and the consciousness of the mystic. Before perfection is reached, we find a man displaying great versatility. He becomes adept at matters of science, mechanics, and he is skilled in one or more of the arts, is versed in writing and speaking, becomes extremely interested in world affairs, and may make useful contributions to one or more branches of knowledge. He as well is a philosopher and a mystic. The world has known many such men, as Imhotep of ancient Egypt, Aristotle, Pythagoras, Leonardo da Vinci, Francis Bacon, and I think we can rightly include our late Imperator, Dr. H. Spencer Lewis.—X



Balked By a Word!

Does a Definition Stand Between
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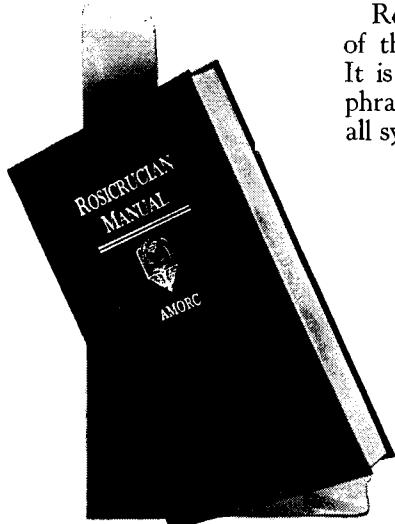
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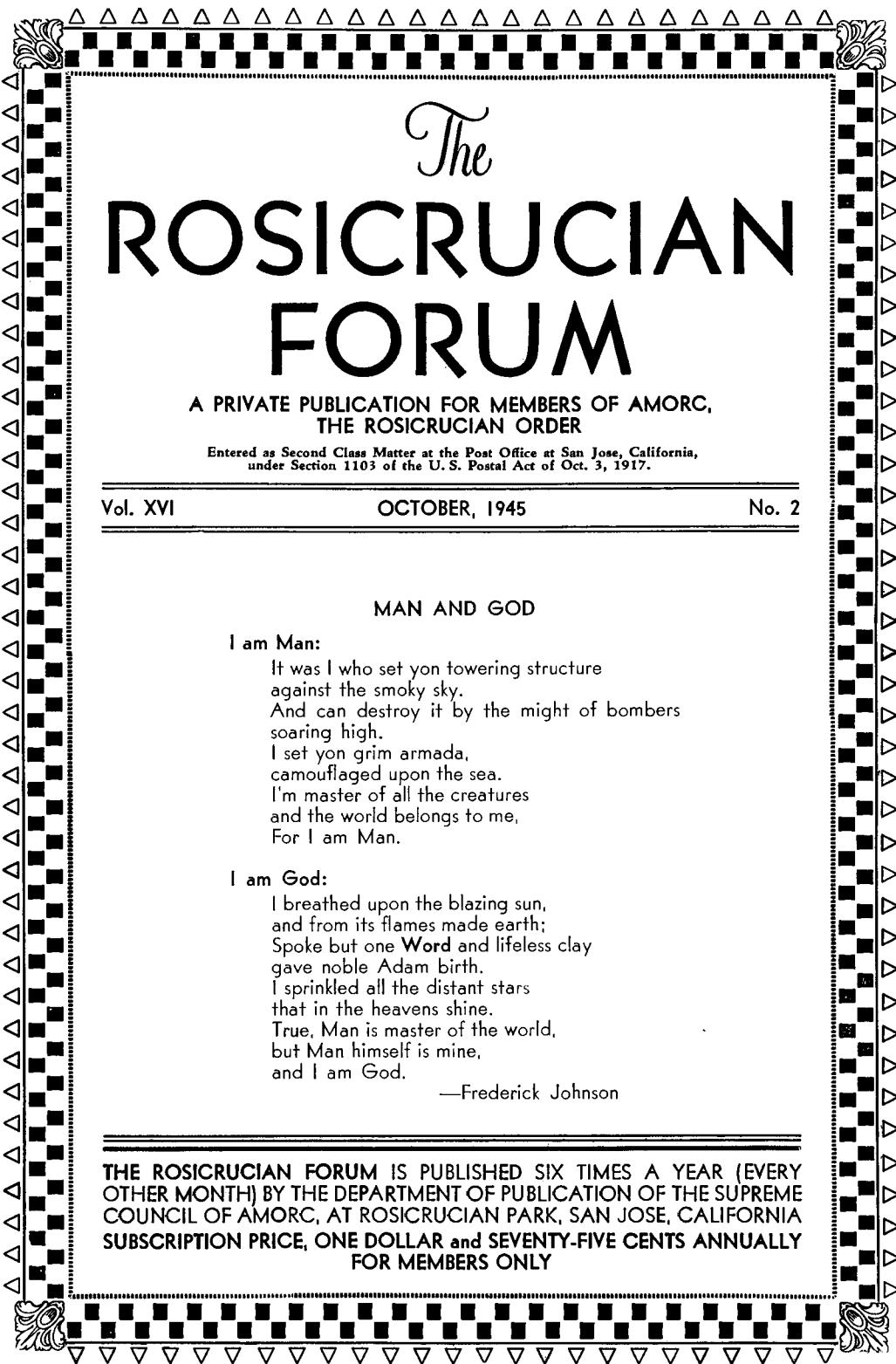
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MAN AND GOD

I am Man:

It was I who set yon towering structure
against the smoky sky.
And can destroy it by the might of bombers
soaring high.
I set yon grim armada,
camouflaged upon the sea.
I'm master of all the creatures
and the world belongs to me,
For I am Man.

I am God:

I breathed upon the blazing sun,
and from its flames made earth;
Spoke but one Word and lifeless clay
gave noble Adam birth.
I sprinkled all the distant stars
that in the heavens shine.
True, Man is master of the world,
but Man himself is mine,
and I am God.

—Frederick Johnson

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Greetings!



Dear Fratres and Sorores:

The subject of atomic power is on the tip of everyone's tongue. To most persons it appears as an entirely revolutionary discovery. The use to which it is applied and certain refinements of the processes are, of course, new; however, in the main the basic principles are not new to physicists or students of physics. For years the contributory experimentation in this field of research was too technical and not spectacular enough to attract public attention. It is unfortunate that a dramatic presentation of a development often fails to give credit to the original workers who made it possible. There are, for example, many persons who are of the opinion that radio was discovered or produced as a single accomplishment. They are not aware of the tremendous technological contributions which entered into the development of radio for over a century. Such men as Faraday, Crookes, Hertz, and a host of others brought forth discoveries which became important elements and principles in the device and function which we call *radio*.

The release of atomic power, as we know it today is, therefore, a *gradual development*. In 1896 a French scientist, Antoine Henri Becquerel, discovered something resembling X-rays, and which was radiated by pitchblende and other minerals and which contained the element, *uranium*. Further experimentation proved that as a photographic plate is placed close to the minerals, a shadow photograph of dense objects is formed. This property of uranium became known as *radioactivity*. Not long after the discoveries of Monsieur Becquerel, Monsieur and Madame Curie conducted experiments in Paris. They found that thorium had the same property of radioactivity as uranium; in fact, thorium is the next heaviest element to uranium. Later, the Curies found that pitchblende in a certain locality of Austria produced more radioactivity than an equal amount of uranium and thorium. They eventually succeeded in separating a minute amount of the substance from *tons* of pitchblende. This was

obviously a laborious task. The substance proved to be an *unknown* chemical element. The Curies called it *radium*. The intensity of the radiation of radium can be appreciated by the fact that it is four million times as active as pure uranium.

Lord Rutherford (1871-1937) from a study of radioactive minerals formulated the *transformation theory*. This theory expounds the idea that atoms of radioactive material are in a continuous process of disintegration, namely, breaking down. The disintegrated or free elements form new atoms. The new atoms have different characteristics and properties from that of their parent atoms. Such new atoms are unstable; that is, they are continually breaking up and emitting *alpha* and *beta* rays.

In 1919 Lord Rutherford *bombarded* nitrogen gas with *alpha* particles and obtained some *protons*. Protons are particles having a *positive* electric charge. However, the *transmutation of matter*, an ideal of the ancient alchemists, to be accomplished with any degree of scientific control, required bombardment of the nucleus of non-radioactive atoms with high-energy projectiles. These projectiles were alpha particles, protons, and neutrons. In other words, these particles were something like electronic bullets that were to be fired at the heart of certain atoms. In 1930 a device known as the cyclotron was developed in the laboratories of the University of California at Berkeley. To Professor E. O. Laurence must go the major credit for this development. This device fired projectiles of energy at the nucleus of atoms and became known as the *atom smasher*. The control of the projectiles of energy by firing them through a magnetic field was learned in the use of this cyclotron apparatus.

In 1939 it was shown, after much experimentation, that the heaviest atom, the uranium atom, could be *split* into nearly equal parts. To accomplish this, slow-speed neutrons, masses without any electrical charge, were used. The neutrons were slowed down

by passing them through water or paraffin. This process became technically known as the *fission of uranium*. When a uranium nucleus is disintegrated, a tremendous amount of energy is released.

In scientific circles it is contended that there is probably a still smaller particle of energy than the electron, though the electron is the smallest now definitely known. From the Cosmological point of view, the physical universe is but a vast sea of energy. It is an energy that vibrates or pulsates between two extremes of characteristics which we may call *polarity*. The positive aspect may be its most active aspect; the negative, that which is less active. From out of the rhythmic vibrating nature of this energy all being, or expression of nature, manifests, such as light, magnetism, matter, etc. Orthodox science is, of course, still striving to integrate these aspects, namely, to show how one aspect of nature merges into another. It seeks to unify all of nature, to introduce an understandable, harmonious Cosmic. Such a study has, of course, long been the practice and purpose of the Rosicrucian *teachings*. Man is gradually penetrating the *material soul*, the physical essence of the universe. Once he can direct the primeval energy of the universe he has become a kind of God; whether he becomes a benevolent god or a malevolent one, depends upon the application of the power which he gradually acquires. Just as fire can consume and destroy great works, as well as make them possible, so can the further extension of atomic power absolutely destroy humanity if certain preventives are not adopted.

Will the Cosmic Mind permit the destruction of humanity by the diabolic use of atomic power? The Cosmic will neither aid nor abet the misuse of such power. Man has been Cosmically endowed with *intelligence*. With this intelligence he is able to fathom the mysteries of the universe. Man has likewise been endowed with Soul and the moral sense which is the divine essence of humanity. The latter can temper the former, namely intelligence. A highly developed moral sense will be able to control and relegate to their place such impulses as avarice, jealousy, and the lust for savage domination of one's fellow men. If a man suppresses conscience, however, and intelligence is allowed to run rampant without circumspection, it will then mean man's self-destruction. We are *free beings*

in the sense that we direct and exercise our faculties and powers. If the Cosmic were to intervene and direct these powers and faculties for us at all times, we would never learn karmic lessons. If it comes about that man destroys himself with atomic power, it will be because of his selfishness and his hate, not because of the supremacy of the elements of nature. Under such circumstances it would be better that such a kind of being cease to be.

At the moment, the dangers that exist in the use of atomic power are far greater than the potential advantages to be gained. Human nature is emotionally still quite primitive. Man today, in his direction of atomic power, is like a child having in his possession a high-powered rifle—almost anything can happen.

It is pathetic to read how the general public is of the opinion that the *secret* of the atomic bomb can be suppressed. As we have shown, research in this field of physics has been done for a number of years. Innumerable scientific groups have been on the verge of the eventual refinement of the splitting of the atom. Such groups will continue secretly in their research—and they will discover all that the United States and Britain have learned. It is childish to imagine that the other Powers will not develop an atomic bomb equal to, or superior to, the one developed by the United States. The only salvation for the world lies in *moral development*—an inward development that must keep abreast of technological advances. We should not hope, for analogy, for a sword to become dull and harmless in the hands of someone who might misuse it. Rather, it is better to hope that he will have acquired self-mastery and so be able to discipline himself as to never wrongly use it.

Fraternally,

RALPH M. LEWIS,
Imperator.

Psychic Readiness

A Frater in his report to the Department of Instruction asks, "When are we psychically ready for advancement?" I presume he meant by this, "When do we reach a state of such psychic development that we are able to move on to a higher scale of illumination and understanding?" He then proceeds to question, "What would constitute psychic

readiness?" He points out that the psychic self, being an attribute to the soul, is perfect, and therefore, if it is already perfect, how can it ever reach a state of being more ready or in a position for further development or growth?

The reasoning of this viewpoint is sound. We do not attempt to deny that the soul is perfection, that the soul incarnates in a psychic body for the development of personality, the personality that we carry through a particular incarnation and which is absorbed into the individuality of the soul to become a part of the totality of our existence and experience for all time. When the soul so incarnates its expression is limited to the limitations of the form which it takes—that is, the physical body—and we must develop the use of the psychic abilities that are available to us.

A parallel might be made with a physical body. If a child is born physically sound and perfect the question might be asked, "If a perfect physical body exists, why does the child have to be trained—why does he have to be taught to walk and talk or do anything that we consider a normal human being is able to do?" It is not perfection alone that accomplishes the ends for which a body is made, but experience as it comes to and through the working of the personality, which is a definite link between the objective mind and the subjective mind, the latter being the mind of the soul. Therefore, we are progressing, or should be, if we are living properly in a physical incarnation, toward a unification of the potentialities of body and soul. We are aiming toward over-all development, but our own readiness to use our own objective abilities to accumulate knowledge in our mind or memory gradually comes to the point of involving more and more of our time and effort. Building up an availability of knowledge and experience that will make it possible for us to estimate properly the true values of being and to benefit by their being part of us is a most important factor, but we must not forget that the physical is temporary and we have the task of building for immortality.

We develop physically with little thought about the matter. If we receive proper nutrition and reasonably good moral and academic education, we develop into normal adults in due time, but in this process which

has so absorbed us in the body and in the physical environment, most of us have not developed the parallel potentialities of our psychic self or soul. So, it is as adults we have to learn that there are other possibilities of development, that there are unused sources of power within us that can be brought to bear upon the whole matter of our scheme of life, and we return toward the development of that source if we are wise. We find that we cannot think in terms of subjective consciousness as we can in the objective; that the soul has a contact with a higher force but must be reached in a subtle manner in accordance with the physical dealings about us. And consequently, we say our attention to the outside world has caused us to neglect the process of the technique by which we will bring attention to the soul, or the small voice within us. If we are conscientious and systematic with the development of this potentiality, we reach the time when intuition or the voice of the psychic self becomes a part of our perceptive ability as do the five physical senses, and so it is then that we reach the state of a balanced life when we truly have and use six senses—our five physical ones plus the one of *intuition* which puts us in contact with the accumulated knowledge of the psychic self or soul. It is then that a state of psychic readiness has been perfected. It is because in this personality which we are developing in this physical life we have reached a state of equilibrium where the body and soul are co-ordinated and find an expression in the personality which we have developed, and through both we may attain perfection of this life and the means of entry into a better one.—A

Strangely Familiar Places

A soror in San Francisco addresses our FORUM and says: "This is what has puzzled me for years. Often in visiting an outdoor scene or building, I have a distinct feeling that I have seen and been at that particular place at some previous time. I know that I have actually not been there in person in this life. Also, I know I have not seen the place in a printed picture. I could explain the sensation or feeling as a memory of a former incarnation, except for the fact that in most cases the buildings and scenery, as a land-

scape, are *new* in this world—from five to ten years old. Further, I am from a family that can trace its ancestry back hundreds of years, and no member of it ever visited America. What causes these feelings of recognition of such scenes and buildings?"

As the soror states, the fact that the places are new precludes their being a memory of a previous incarnation. Consequently, the explanation centers in the fantasies of the subconscious mind. The subjective part of our mind creates thought patterns from objective experiences, often without our will or direction. The most common example of such phenomenon is our dreams. We dream of people, of incidents, and places which have no actual parallel in our objective experiences. In other words, we dream of many things which actually have never occurred to us nor been perceived by us during our awakened state. When we are asleep the will and the reasoning powers are dormant. The subjective self is undisciplined by the objective, and can and does release from memory elements of actual experiences. Under the influence of our uncontrolled emotions, the subjective combines these into fanciful images or dreams. Even the most fantastic dreams, of course, have in them elements which have been experienced. Otherwise, we could not realize them. The dream, however, in its entirety, may be strange and quite unlike any actual objective experience. Then again, our imagination during our awakened state, our so-called flights of fancy, reaches through and makes impressions upon the subconscious. These impressions recur in our objective minds occasionally, under a new form of arrangement of ideas that on the one hand seem new to us, and yet there is a strange recognition or familiarity about them.

Let me use an analogy to try to explain this, shall we say, odd mental functioning which we all experience at times. We may think of man's progress upward spiritually and in the attainment of knowledge as a climb or an ascent. We may think of him laboring up a great stairway, a stairway representing the steps of accomplishment and the things to be learned or done. At the top of the great stairway, which seems to run almost into infinity, is the peak of attainment. In our minds, we vaguely symbolize this attainment as a beautiful castle

or a magnificent white palace. The beauty of the design and its pure whiteness denote perfection or the illumination which is had as a reward for the struggle upward. Now, perhaps we never actually formulated this whole scene in our thinking, as I have described it here. However, the idea was inchoate in our thinking; that is, it existed in its elements as a result of our meditations on our own progress and struggle upward in our own spiritual development. Perhaps only for a moment did we vaguely have such an allegorical conception of man's intellectual and spiritual conquests, and then perhaps we dismissed it because of the invasion of other thoughts. Nevertheless, if when we were thinking of these different symbols—the clouds, the castle, the winding stairway—if there were any real emotional emphasis or feeling behind the thoughts, they would register in our subjective minds. In the subjective they would then come to form a *thought pattern*. The different impressions would be registered in memory as an image, or as a mental picture. Psychology calls these impressions *eidetic* images.

Perhaps months later we might be traveling in a foreign mountainous country. It is the first time we have ever been in that country in our lifetime. As we journey along, suddenly there appears at some distance a lofty rocky eminence. It is an actual mountain crag. It seems to reach up into the clouds which hover about its top. In a crevice in the crag, we see winding upward a graceful flight of stairs, their whiteness glistening against the somber, brownish-black of the rocky formation. Following them upward with our eyes we see indistinctly on the peak an edifice resplendent in the sun. It almost seems to float in the fleecy clouds which surround it like a collar. Its crenelated top and turrets penetrate the clouds in a fairy-tale-like manner. Immediately the whole scene seems akin or familiar to us. To ourselves we say: "Why I recognize this! I feel that I have been here before." Our guide then informs us that the stairs and the edifice have only been constructed ten years before and that no photograph of it has ever been published. Nevertheless, the sensations of familiarity persist.

What has occurred in such an experience? What is the cause of it? The cause of it is the psychological principles we have enumerated.

The objective experience of what we have just seen participates in the symbolic idea once formed, and now firmly established in our subjective mind. The moment we see an actual similar scene, the symbolic idea is released from memory in the subjective and associated with the present experience. We are, therefore, conscious of two things—first, what we experience objectively; and, second, the memory experience of our symbolic idea. The memory of the symbolic idea is vague. We do not know that it was engendered by our imagination, that is, thinking in the past, of man climbing upward spiritually. Consequently it seems like the recollection of some remote, actual objective experience.

All of us have certain ideals of beauty, whether visual or as harmony of sound. These ideals are often very indistinct in our minds. We cannot exactly express them in terms or words, or even in designs. However, these ideals become very firmly impressed on the subjective mind. Whenever in our life we experience in actual form, as a musical composition or as an object, that which produces sensations or feelings corresponding to those ideals, it immediately engenders familiar feelings. It releases from the subjective mind those images which were associated with the ideals we have had, and accompanying those images is the feeling of familiarity. We are thus confused as to whether we have seen the objects somewhere before. Knowing these psychological principles, it sometimes is not difficult to trace the cause of such feelings of recognition. If the objects are newly built, that of course disposes of having seen them in a previous incarnation. The next thing, then, is always to inquire into our ideals and flights of imagination, as to whether there is any parallel between them and that which we now objectively seek.—X

What Price Mastership?

A frater from Saskatchewan comes forth with this interesting question: "In considering the lives of many great men, such as Francis Bacon, who was betrayed by his enemies, Mark Twain who lost all who were dear to him, and Benjamin Franklin who was betrayed by his son, I note that stark

tragedy overcame them before transition. Are these the prices we pay for Mastership?"

The answer must be, to a certain extent, yes. It is not Cosmically demanded that such prices for success or Mastership be paid. It is, however, a position in which one often places himself in order to serve humanity. If he does not make such sacrifices to further a noble ideal when it is necessary, he does not have the strength of character to succeed to a place of leadership in any sphere worthy of human activity. There are, of course, a great number of men who were prominent in the development of thought and the humanities who passed through transition without such pains and tribulations.

First, from a Cosmic point of view, man may be ordained for the position he assumes. I do not mean that fate has prescribed that he shall be a great benefactor to humanity. Rather, I mean that in the course of the cycle of his soul-personality he is given the opportunity so to serve humanity. Such opportunity carries with it innumerable tests arising out of the circumstances. By one's own will and character, he either passes those tests or he fails. If he fails, he may never again be provided with such an opportunity. Again let us make it perspicuous that these tragedies have not been prescribed by God, the Cosmic, or a fate. They emerge from the conduct of the man who must challenge the events of his time to serve humanity as a leader.

Suppose a man of unusual intelligence and great Cosmic insight or intuition is born during a time and in a community where people are enmeshed in superstition and ignorance. The natural inclination of such an individual would compel him to inquire into and investigate those matters which others had merely accepted as tradition. His consequent studies and researches would be bound to produce facts and knowledge that would constitute an aberration from the thought of the times. The progressive mind then is either obliged to suppress such discovery of truth or expound it. If the individual is really intelligent and truly inspired with the love to advance mankind, he will not suppress the results of his studies. The moment then that he starts exhorting others to abandon their misbeliefs and accept the truth, he has issued a challenge to many who hear him.

To such persons he appears as a *corrupter of tradition*.

Again, if some have been prospering by the dissemination of false knowledge, they consider him the usurper of their powers and perfidious means of livelihood. Still, again, those who may have enjoyed posing as sages and preceptors in their community would consider this expounder of truth as a rival to their position of eminence. Immediately, therefore, the man who conscientiously desires to serve mankind has unwittingly incurred the enmity of a great number of persons and perhaps powerful groups. These groups malign him and persecute him every step of the way. They truly try to sear the soul of the man. Only one who actually loves his impersonal work and who feels he has a mission to perform would and could endure the sacrifices he is called upon to meet. The enemies intentionally misrepresent the benefactors of mankind. They wish to defame them and cause them to lose that confidence the general public may have in them. Oftentimes unthinking members of the benefactor's family, or persons who were once fairly close to him, but did not really comprehend his far-advanced ideas, fall under the influence of the insidious campaign instigated by the enemies and then these former associates or members of the family turn on the benefactor as well.

No one, unless he has had to suffer this persecution to further an ideal can truly realize the mental torment it entails. I have had the personal experience of seeing a great man continually persecuted in the most vile way for years, because he dared to oppose men who were misrepresenting or suppressing truth. I have reference to our late Imperator, Dr. H. Spencer Lewis. Each year, with the expansion of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, with its dissemination of truth for the enlightenment of mankind, more and more enemies were developed by its progressive activities. All of those who considered AMORC a rival to their functions, or thought its enlightenment of mankind prevented them from exploiting humanity, viciously attacked Dr. Lewis personally. He symbolized to these enemies, most of whom he had never met, the intellectual and inspirational power and impetus behind the Order's activities. If, in their opinion, they could successfully malign him, they believed they

could destroy AMORC and its cause. This vicious attack extended from Dr. Lewis to every member of his family and to his home life. It sought to discredit him in public life in nearly every civilized nation of the world. Many of the accusations levelled against him could not be ignored, as unthinking persons often said they should be. To ignore them would have amounted to a tacit acknowledgement of them. However, to disprove them required the expenditure of hours of time and considerable expense. It was an expenditure of money and time which could have been used for the furtherance of the *Great Cause* if the attacks had not existed. No one will ever know the heartaches, and the mental and spiritual crucifixion which he had to endure. All he would have needed to do to save himself this torment would have been to compromise with his enemies, to submit to their demands. One not Cosmically given such an opportunity to serve humanity might have retreated before the personal onslaught and saved himself.

What was the compensation for all of this sacrifice? Certainly not money. No nominal salary, such as the Imperator of AMORC received was worth the ordeal. A man with his talents could have at any time in private enterprise received a greater income without experiencing such an ordeal. The reward was in the gradual realization of the great ideal which was being fulfilled. The comfort to the soul, the joy from great constructive accomplishment was the incentive which carried him on.

It is the incentive that carries on every humanitarian who in his thoughts and conduct is ahead of his times. Such men literally have to buck the weight of thousands of minds which are figuratively at rest. They have to give their lives to setting into motion the individual consciousness of thousands or millions of minds. They use their own intellect, personality, and spiritual qualities as the stimulus by which humanity is given momentum in the different periods of the world's history.

Baruch Spinoza, Portuguese Jew, born in Amsterdam in 1632, and great *mystical* philosopher, was another mind who endured great suffering because of misunderstanding on the part of the masses. "On account of the scandal growing out of heretical opinions, he was excommunicated from the Synagogue

in 1656, after vain attempts to have him maintain at least an outward conformity. So bitter was the feeling against him that an attempt was even made to get rid of him by assassination; and his opinions were hardly less objectionable to Christians than to Jews." Some historians have referred to him as "the man thrice exiled." His parents had been exiled from Portugal to escape religious persecution there, and Spinoza could never visit Portugal. Later he was excommunicated from the Synagogue and, third, he was excluded from association with the illiberal Christians because of his advanced and unorthodox mystical views. The world now refers to him as one of the most profound minds of all times.

No sane person would want to endure such hardships unless he were a fanatical ascetic. On the other hand, one who is truly imbued with the spirit of advancing knowledge and serving mankind will not shun such sacrifices if necessary. Fortunately each student of mysticism or sincere seeker after truth is not obliged to make such sacrifices. Only when one is truly *illuminated* and thus by his thoughts or leadership is compelled to oppose a relatively static intellectual world is he precipitated into such a situation. Then, if necessary, he must pay such a price for mastership.—X

An Allegory of the Temple

When first the neophyte approaches the Temple of the Order for admittance into the portals of membership, his experiences include entrance into the anteroom of the Temple. This chamber is a point at which the neophyte pauses in order to survey the complexities of being. It is the chamber of the cross, and in it he sees the cross in all its symbology, the full meaning of the cross, including, in a sense, the neophyte himself, and upon it the rose which is symbolic of the potential development within each individual neophyte. This chamber of the cross is furthermore the abiding place of *life* and *death*. In this chamber with both life and death represented, the neophyte hears their injunctions and contemplates, possibly for the first time, the full significance of the existence of being and his part of being. This chamber is therefore symbolic of the whole

universe and all its manifest and hidden forces.

Such is the prelude to initiation. It is the beginning, the foundation, upon which the future course of a well-directed life will be founded. The student or neophyte in surveying the implications of life and death is, in a sense, removed from immediate participation in the affairs of the world. At the same time, however, there is opened to him a new world in which he, in the position of an object removed from all participation in creation, can survey the whole drama of life, death, and being in an impartial and non-participating sense.

It is with a profound realization of the limitations of self and of the seriousness of one's own life that the neophyte progresses from the chamber of the cross to the threshold of the temple. The threshold, as is indicated by its name, is the division point which not only physically separates the outside world and the chamber of the cross from the temple or the inner world, but it is also a separation point between a life that was and a life that is to be. Once it is passed the neophyte has taken the step in which he figuratively exemplifies the mental processes that have preceded the step, that of selecting a new life.

Just as the student is desirous of reorienting his concepts of value and entering into a realm of instruction and experience, leaving the mistakes of the past behind, so he actually steps across the threshold separating the outside from the temple within, this temple being representative as a whole of his own inner self. In the whole of man's life, the crossing of the threshold is comparable to the many decisions and changes he must make from time to time. From out of the universal consciousness into a physical body is incarnated a soul, a new personality that has potential future development. The process of one's crossing the threshold, whether it be at the time of birth or of initiation, becomes a part of the basic consciousness of the individual and can never be completely ignored or put out of one's existence.

Crossing the threshold is then a beginning, a step, physically in initiation and figuratively in life, in which one enters a new world of being. The master of the temple, when symbolically portraying in the ritualism of the Rosicrucians this allegory of life, proceeds

from the threshold to the central point of the temple known as the Shekinah. The Shekinah is in a sense the temple within the temple. It represents at the center the very heart and ideals, not of the physical temple itself necessarily but of those who participate in the convocations, rituals, yearnings, desires, and hopes as evidenced by each one who has ever crossed that threshold, and who after so doing uses the temple as representative of the ideals that he seeks. The Shekinah symbolizes the presence of God in our midst. Just as a segment of the Cosmic mind resides within each individual and is a central point of all life and consciousness, so does this Shekinah represent that point or presence of God about which all our work in the temple is done. It is also symbolized by the point within the inner circle. It is the point of culmination and the point indicating from which source radiates power and direction for man.

As the master, or the student, physically passes from the temple threshold to a point before the Shekinah, there has been symbolized in that passage the process of change from universal consciousness to self-consciousness, because these very steps have symbolized the age of childhood in the life of man, the period in which man first comes to the realization of self, the transition from infancy to self-consciousness, and if properly directed, it is even the first step toward Cosmic consciousness.

As the master turns from the Shekinah and moves toward the East, he is moving toward the symbolic representation of the first point on the horizon. This process, insofar as the temple ritual is concerned, is the movement toward that point of responsibility and service—toward the acknowledgement of the symbolic point of light and illumination. The East symbolizes all that man can hope for, all that he can seek, because in and through it is represented rebirth—new life begun, the hope of realization. In our ritual, the student is represented as standing before the East; he has passed from a nonentity toward a realization of a certain self-assurance and selfhood that will be his from there on. This process from the Shekinah to the East is expressed in life by growth to the adult state. It is the passage from childhood and its faint realizations to the responsibilities of the grown man or woman. It is the point

reached representing the young adult with all the vitality and optimism of youth.

The individual with his life before him, who is symbolized by standing in the East, is partly conscious of the powers and abilities that he has and the beginning of the full responsibilities of life as if it were a rebirth. There many ideals and hopes are formulated. The work of life is chosen, and with a determined desire to achieve successfully the realizations that hope, as symbolized by the East, represents.

After dwelling there for guidance and direction, life is further symbolized by the movement of the master in the temple from the East toward the South. It is in the South that we find represented the point of greatest light. It is in the South where the sun reaches the zenith, where the light that it sheds shines in its greatest glory and strength. It is therefore the point of fulfillment. Here then is represented the highest achievement of life.

It is not possible in our allegorical interpretation of the progress of the student, or the master, to the various points of the temple to consider in terms of time the passage between these points, but this transition from the East to the South compares approximately to the period of the adult years reaching from the full realization of the responsibilities of adulthood to the achievement of certain of the goals and hopes that were set forth in the East. This passage in life may be a part of the most turbulent of all. It is the time during which man's soul is truly tried; it is the period of achievements and failures, of happiness and depression; the period in which all that has been formulated as the worth-while purpose of life meets its crisis.

Some arrive in a comparatively short time, in terms of years, over this journey between the East and the South; others find fulfillment only in later years, and some never achieve it. Fulfillment, however, is necessarily in terms of the steadfastness by which the individual holds to the ideals and principles to which he has subscribed during and before this particular period. But we cannot pause in the South. Full culmination and achievement of any process is but momentary, just as the sun in the South in a moment passes its zenith. We look forward to that particular point with great hope and anticipation, but as all glory that is sought

in all achievements toward which we strive, it is passed in an instant, and so complete fulfillment lies primarily in its value of anticipation, and after being achieved, in the satisfaction of reflection and review on a task well done.

As man turns from the South and journeys toward the West, it does not mean that his life is no longer useful, that only a state of suspension in life continues, because this whole period as represented by progress from the South to the West of the temple is, in a sense, a continuation of the fulfillment culminated in the South. Actually in life, many achievements and some of the greatest contributions to mankind have been made during this period. It is because of the realization of accomplishment, the understanding of the workings of the ideals chosen in earlier life and of the humbleness of fulfillment, that he who has passed the South can move on toward the West knowing that time and life have been well spent.

The West, in our temple, symbolizes the point of peace and rest. It, in a sense, is another threshold. Just as the threshold from the chamber of the cross to the temple is a transition, so the West is a transition—a threshold toward a fuller and more direct realization of immortality. The life which has reached its culmination here passes on into higher degrees in other temples not built by the hand of man, and their arrangement in symbology is incomprehensible to those who still dwell on the plane in which the symbols of our physical temple are applicable. It is during the period from the South to the West that more complete attunement with the universal mind and Cosmic is obtainable, and so for the life well directed, the arrival at the West and of transition that follows is a state of transition, not only in the change of the body and soul but of change from self-consciousness to Cosmic consciousness, as was the period of infancy in which universal consciousness was brought to self-consciousness. So in the West we find represented peace, rest, accomplishment, and the satisfaction of the task well done and completed—with no regrets and only a desire to be equipped again with even greater abilities and potentialities, and, if necessary, with new bodies that can, by the means of another life, with greater understanding and more complete realization of

its implications, live again and carry toward greater fulfillment the purposes and ideals which are now imperfect.

In the allegory of this temple we have not mentioned one point, the point representing the North. The North is representative in a sense of two things. In general, it is the place of darkness—it is the point at which symbolically reside those who refuse or *will* not to make progress, not to try to live up to the potentialities of their being in life. In this state of darkness the light of the other points of the temple fail to penetrate. In life it symbolizes the individual who lives only in terms of his physical senses. He is not guided by light—he works in the dark; his values are the values of possession. He thinks he needs no light for he can feel his goal and values only the evidence of his objective senses. The time comes, however, as age creeps upon this individual, when through the dimness of this darkened position, in which he dwells, a gleam of light is seen symbolically from the other points of the temple, and while it may not be until the last breath of his earthly life, he eventually finds that all the time true light was not in the glitter of reflected light in his gold, but in the source of the light that caused the reflection. Ahead of him lies only rebirth at this point—rebirth possibly many times until the full realization of value and of reality come to be known from outside the limitations of this small world of darkness.

In addition to this meaning, the North is symbolical of the point to which any of us may return from any point as symbolized by the points of this temple on the journey of life. It is the point that symbolizes the failure, temporary or otherwise, of man to maintain his ideals. It is the only point to which we can turn back if we stumble and fall on our path about this temple, and as such becomes a place to dwell for those who, lacking the proper motivation to do for themselves, seek someone else to act for them. It is the point of the weak-hearted, where he hails every other pilgrim who passes, to ask for knowledge, but makes no effort to gain and experience the implications of that knowledge. Many, many dwell here rather than to put forth the effort that will lead toward bringing them into a point of greater illumination.

The North further symbolizes in the Rosicrucian teachings those who would gain only knowledge or a collection of facts—those who do not attempt to practice the principles which the masters direct. It is the point of procrastination—the point of idleness. We alone can overcome the limitations as symbolized by this point of the temple and raise ourselves to move from it again toward the East and about the points of the temple toward ultimate fulfillment and culmination. In the end it is a point of sorrow, because here we see those who have groped on many false paths reach the end of life without ever having progressed beyond this one point. Theirs was the same spirit as those who proceeded. They crossed the threshold, they beheld the presence of God in the Shekinah, but delay, procrastination, idleness, laziness, bigotry, prejudice, and all negative states of which man can conceive held them fixed permanently to the point of darkness.

Such is in part an allegory representing certain symbolical principles of the Rosicrucian temple. The ritual in which we participate, from time to time, in the temple, helps us to dramatize and place ourselves in a dramatic position of realization of many of the steps of life which we each must individually follow. In the process here outlined, we see symbolized the whole of life. Each time we enter the temple we can relive and re-perform, either in person or by watching those who do perform, the ritual, and be reminded again and again of our ideals and purposes in life—of our beginning, of our achievements, of our failures, and of the eternity before us.—A

Problems of Administration

The primary purpose of the articles in *The Rosicrucian Forum* is to discuss doctrinal matters concerning the teachings of the Order. At the same time, however, it is the desire of the Supreme officers of the Order to have *The Rosicrucian Forum* reflect the questions in the minds of the members of the Order, and wherever a question seems to be prevalent in correspondence to make an official answer through these pages.

One question numerous members have asked during the past few months, in fact, during the years of the war, has to do with delays in receipt of acknowledgements to

their letters and to receipts for dues, and other purely administrative matters concerning the relationship of the individual student member to the Grand Lodge. We have refrained during the period of the war from going into detailed explanation of problems of administration because it was not our desire to make it appear in any way that we were regretful of any sacrifices that had to be made for the successful prosecution of the war, but now that the days of peace are here, and I might add, the problems of peace are ahead, we can share with our members some of the administrative problems that have occurred in the past few years, and suggest ways and means by which members may cooperate in assisting with the administrative procedure of the organization's offices here at Rosicrucian Park.

One of the most difficult problems to control during the years of war was that of maintaining efficiency on the part of employees. This organization being a nonprofit institution, had the salaries that it could pay employees frozen at the rate which it had paid on the average pre-war years. While the basic salaries of this organization compare favorably with the rate of salaries in this part of the country, we had little opportunity for variation during the war, and in view of the fact that many war plants in this area were desperately in need of skilled help for the prosecution of the war, and could, through their six-day week, with one day at overtime pay, offer a much higher salary, skilled employees from all private organizations and business concerns gradually moved into war industries. AMORC was affected by this condition. We necessarily had to employ less experienced help. We were faced with the problem not only of training new help, but of having to hire less efficiently trained help. Consequently, errors occurred in various administrative departments of the organization that had never occurred in the past history of the Order.

We regret the inconveniences to which members were placed, but at the same time we want our members to know that we were aware of these conditions, and the officers and department executives, many of them working long hours in excess of the customary work week, were desperately doing all that they could to maintain the efficiency of the organization. Furthermore, numerous

persons in key positions were either called into specialized war work or into military service; so consequently, during the entire period of the war the problem of personnel was a constant one which faced the officers of the Order in every decision.

Problems of supplies were also difficult. Scarcity of paper, and our continued activities depended upon paper, caused us to make all kinds of adjustments in order to maintain our organizational work. Many people do not realize that one of the industries during the war that had many problems and difficulties was that concerned with the manufacture of envelopes. There were times when the mailing of our monographs was held up to within a matter of a few hours, awaiting arrival of a shipment of envelopes from the factory that supplies us. The complete co-operation of our source of envelope supply and consideration of our need of envelopes to carry on our activities made it possible for us never to have to miss a mailing, although substitute materials and many adjustments were necessary so that deliveries could be made. These were problems that had to be dealt with every week.

In addition to these two problems, which were internal insofar as administrative problems were concerned, there was another factor that had to do with deliveries. Since transportation facilities were secured first by the military service, there were even delays in mail, sometimes unbelievably long. We would receive letters postmarked sometimes two, three, and even four weeks prior to our receipt of them; then the member not receiving a reply would have written again, which gave our Adjustment Department just that many more pieces of correspondence to handle in order to untangle the situation. Many somewhat amusing conditions existed, if we could consider them amusing in those rather serious times. Frequently a letter from a member would arrive referring to a letter not yet received by us. In spite of these many difficulties, we tried to make these adjustments as rapidly and efficiently as possible.

We are now working no less hard than during the actual war years to improve constantly upon the efficiency of our administrative activities. This, however, cannot be an overnight change. We do believe that some progress has been made, and we can assure

our members that steps are being taken every day to continue this progress, but there are still many difficulties. In this area, there are still more jobs available than there are persons to fill them; consequently, there is no surplus of trained employees to fill positions that become open here when employees leave or move away.

There is also a scarcity of some supplies; again much of this scarcity is still in the field of paper, upon which we are so vitally dependent. All these problems, however, are going gradually to adjust themselves as we put ourselves to the task of efficient administration of the organization's affairs. To our employees who have stayed with us through the war, a number of key employees in more important positions, we and the members of the Order owe a great deal. As to the members who have been tolerant of the problems which we have had to face, we are appreciative of their taking into consideration the fact that we did not want delays any more than they did. We ask this continued consideration for the next few months, through this period of adjustment back into the ways of peace. We will assure you that everything within our power will be done to handle efficiently and systematically every piece of mail, as far as it can be done, in a manner that will not in any way bar the efficient handling of correspondence.

You can cooperate by following instructions carefully as given in the little folder entitled "How to Write your Letters to Headquarters (Grand Lodge)," and also, by determining the mailing time between you and us. Notice the date your monograph was postmarked and the date that you received it, and you will thereby find the minimum time that you can expect the letter to reach you. In writing to us, allow that time, plus a few days for handling the mail here. We hope that during the future years many of our members will have the opportunity to visit us here during a convention, or at some other time of the year, and see the administrative structure of the organization; you will see how your letters are handled between the time they are delivered by the post office until your answer is in the mail.

Your mail first is received in the mail receiving department where it is read for the determination of its routing. In that department your remittances for dues or supplies

are also handled. While every effort is made to keep that department up to date, unusually heavy mail after a holiday, or due to some other condition, may cause a delay of more than a day in that department; then the letter is routed on to the proper department for answering. In this department will be hundreds of other letters like yours, many of them receiving an individually dictated answer, dictated to a stenographer by one of the officers or assistants; these have to be transcribed and then mailed. All these steps take time, and we are making every effort efficiently to handle the mail and at the same time cut down time whenever possible. In the event that you do not receive immediate acknowledgement of your dues, you will understand that your dues were probably received after the mailing of a monograph, and that your dues' receipt will accompany the monograph of one of the following two weeks. Monographs are mailed on Wednesdays; all enclosures, such as dues' receipts and notes, are placed in the monograph envelopes on Mondays prior to the Wednesday mailing. Consequently, if your dues' receipt was not ready by the Monday prior to the time your monograph was mailed, then it could not be included until the next week.

Again we wish to assure all members that we are making every effort to handle correspondence and requests efficiently. Also, we express to you our thanks for the tolerance and cooperation given us in these trying years, and for your continued cooperation and consideration in the months to come.—A

Spirituality and Practicability

Not infrequently a question will concern either someone's statement of the degree of spirituality or practicability possessed by him. Often an individual is desirous of making an estimation of whether a person may be considered to possess those spiritual qualities that are of a nature to demand respect and if he is to be thought of as one who could advise. Sometimes an individual's practical nature will raise a question as to the depth of his spiritual insight.

To fully understand this type of question, it will be necessary to define our terms very specifically, but such terms as *spiritual* and *practical* seem almost to defy definition, and

I am referring to these terms in the accepted or popular sense. To some people a person who was considered spiritual would be an individual who was a religious fanatic. Such a definition of the term naturally would lead one to believe that a person who had anything to do whatsoever with the material world and the affairs of everyday life would not be considered spiritual. Under this interpretation of spiritual, *practical* is considered almost the direct opposite in meaning; that is, one who is practical by this interpretation would be a materialistic-minded individual who had no depth of insight and who simply was an objective mechanism.

Surely the fair-minded person will not accept either of these definitions as being completely true. If a person cannot possess spirituality without being removed from all physical things, making himself a religious recluse, or, on the other hand, if a person cannot be practical without at the same time being an out and out materialist, then human progress is certainly at a point of stalemate. The very individuals who would so confine the definitions of these terms to this type of conception would be the ones probably least apt to exemplify either. If we face facts we must realize that anyone who lives, if he is making a successful adjustment to life and its demands, must strike a balance somewhere between these two extremes.

We are reminded that a fundamental principle of Rosicrucian philosophy is a recognition of man's dual expression. Since he is of a dual nature, that is, being body and soul, and therefore composed of material and immaterial elements, he expresses a combination of two forces or factors operative in the universe. All of us obviously appreciate the fact that man could not be what he is unless both of these factors function within him. He would not be a man without a body or without a soul. Both are necessary to the perfect manifestation of life in the manner in which we can recognize it. Consequently, to say that a person in order to be practical must be one who ignores all things that are not of a material or objective nature is to cause that individual to supposedly be ignoring life itself; on the other hand, if to be spiritual, the material world is ignored or not presumed to exist, then the very vehicle

by which life is manifest on this plane is no longer an existent fact, and obviously we would have no physical contact with other physical things.

To arrive at a more comprehensive definition of our terms, we might say that the degree of spirituality that is evidenced by an individual is based upon the things which the individual values. Value is a fundamental criterion for judging the philosophy of life of any individual. The man or woman who recognizes that all material things are transitory and that the real values are those found in ideals and associations, and furthermore that the true purpose of life is to develop the psychic or spiritual welfare of our being, and that these things endure eternally while our material body and material affairs are temporary, is truly an individual of spiritual viewpoint. If these beliefs and ideas are convictions, then this individual may qualify as being truly spiritual.

Now the question arises, "Can the individual at the same time be practical?" It is obviously true that he can, because the very definitions and requirements as stated above for a person to be considered spiritual are almost the identical qualifications by which a person would be considered practical. The individual who subscribes to and lives by the ideals and principles just enumerated is directing his life so that it will be useful and his activities constructive while he resides in the physical body on the earth, but who, at the same time, is in full realization of more enduring values. Certainly this individual is the very highest exemplification of what the word "practical" should mean. He is, in other words, not only fully cognizant of his true place in the universe and of permanent values, but he is living from day to day with a purpose of utilizing this knowledge and his power to better himself and his fellow men, and is preparing to be worthy of those enduring values with which he can expect to be more familiar in the future. Therefore, when we come to an honest appraisal of what the terms *spiritual* and *practical* may mean, we find that instead of being almost directly opposite in meaning as was first indicated, they are, when considered in proper perspective, almost synonymous. Therefore, it is well for us not to judge the practicability or spirituality of any individual, but rather to sum up through the

individual's thought and actions his complete philosophy of life, and thereby better understand what his ideals and purposes are.—A

Meditation in Practice

The interest, on the part of many members, in meditation is concerned with the process. It is not infrequent that a question from a lower degree member asks for more suggestions as to how to meditate. The state of meditation is one of those conditions which defies a definition. In fact, the more one tries to define such a process the more one becomes involved in words and concepts, and, as a result, a confusion exists that directs the individual away from the process which he is trying to make into a useful one in his life.

We have referred before to the fact that meditation is more than simply doing nothing. Meditation should be creative, and it is closely related to concentration. However, in general terms, the process of concentration is that of directing all of one's energies in the thinking process toward a central idea. To bring one's whole mental process to bear upon one thought, one idea, or one concept is theoretically to dismiss from the mind all else and think of that one thing alone in the process of concentration. After this has been achieved, the way to fulfillment is to dismiss not only the point upon which concentration was brought to bear, but to dismiss all other factors—thoughts, ideas, and concepts—from one's mind and, as near as possible, to make the mind a perfect blank.

Meditation, in comparison with concentration, is a process of growth and development rather than a process of creativeness. When we concentrate to create, we are trying to achieve the development of an idea or condition through the help that our mental processes can bring to bear upon it. As a result of concentration, there are brought about changes or developments in our lives, and anything that is changing or is for the purpose of achieving a specific desired end is a creative process. Meditation, on the other hand, is a period of development and growth. It is a period of contemplation in which we consider certain things that have been more or less achieved or perfected. We try to draw in reflection and contemplation upon our knowledge and experience in such a manner that we will be able better to use

the materials, ideas, and principles which have come to our knowledge.

Meditation can be upon the very simplest of facts or it can be upon the complexities of life as a whole. Whenever we do reflective thinking—in other words, when we assemble ideas, programs, aims, and purposes in our thoughts—we are, in a sense, in a process of meditation, or, as it might be popularly termed, we are “turning the matter over in our minds,” and hope thereby to gain a better viewpoint or picture of our ideas and experiences, and thereby be able to use them better. To put meditation into practice, then, and to do it well, is to develop the ability of physical relaxation and to permit our total knowledge or experience in a number of things or in a specific thing to pass before our mind's eye; and in this process, to appraise and evaluate these things, and in so doing, try to put them into better relationship with each other so that the concentrations received will be purposeful for you. This does not mean that every period of meditation must be upon a problem or series of problems. Meditation can be purely for self-satisfaction; that is, it can be a process of reviewing our lives as a whole, our successes and failures, our achievements and setbacks in such a manner that we can derive strength and a desire for purposeful living through the use of those things which have become ours in thought, whether by experience or by knowledge.

Meditation is furthermore, on the basis of these thoughts, a period of reorientation. Without the ability to meditate man would be less in a position of subjugation to rigid rules and facts. Without meditation, all that we know might be compared to a filing system of cards, each card bearing a certain point, a certain fact, and being filed in a categorical system that would make it impossible to rearrange without confusion resulting. To compare further a system such as a card index to the possessions of mind, we might say that meditation is the process by which we go to our mental files and take out certain cards or items and, putting them before us, permit ourselves to review within the mind the meaning and purpose of the particular facts or factors which each unit or card represents. In this we are permitted to relive our experiences—to pick out the flaws of our past actions and to contemplate the

best use of our equipment and abilities for the future.

There is a great satisfaction in being able to meditate and do it honestly. Even if we must meditate upon failures or upon unpleasant experiences, we have the satisfaction of being able impartially to view these experiences in retrospection, and as such we can derive satisfaction from the part that was successful, and in our capabilities to use this experience to make similar experiences in the future more successful.

One who has learned true meditation has probably come the nearest possible toward the attainment of true happiness. It is the foundation by which all that passes through our minds may be re-grouped into a continuous whole; and the satisfaction that can be obtained through the process of meditatively selecting those things that have brought value to our lives is a state of happiness, not such as other things may bring merely for an hour or a day, but a permanent and steadfast feeling of happiness that can endure for all times. Physical possessions and experiences can bring temporary periods of happiness, but only a viewpoint which can properly evaluate and put the incidents of life at their true point of importance can bring enduring happiness.

Human nature points out in experience that it is much easier to read a book or listen to a discourse than to meditate upon the implications that are included in the book or discourse. We can physically, through seeing or hearing, grasp in a comparatively short period of time an amazing amount of facts and materials, but to pick out by a process of selection the principles contained in what we see or hear, and to tie those new factors of experience into our total life process is far more important. It is not, therefore, the number of books, discourses, or lectures we read or hear that is important, but it is the good which we are able to draw from these experiences, through a meditative process on the subjects and implications contained, that brings us value from these sources. Therefore, while knowledge is a most important attainment, in the final analysis, it is not the amount of knowledge which we can attain, the number of books we read or the frequency with which we hear lectures, discourses, or sermons, but rather, the frequency and earnestness with which

we meditate upon these things, until the truths in them become our own and a part of our own being, that assures growth and development within us.—A

Man's Salvation

Is salvation exclusively a religious doctrine? This question is asked by a member who is somewhat confused regarding the meaning of salvation.

It must be conceded that salvation as a doctrine is primarily related to various forms of religious experience. The one who achieves salvation in the religious sense is one who is turning from one mode of life to another that embraces the religious tenets in which he has found hope and satisfaction. According to various doctrines, the process of salvation is that of new birth. It is the state of passing from an unsatisfactory type of living to one which is in accordance with the dictates of God. The religious doctrine of salvation, therefore, is based upon the absolute law of God as having chosen a way or a path which man should follow, and he who achieves salvation has been able to turn from other paths and select this one which this particular religious doctrine claims is the one ordained and established by man's Creator. The only flaw in this particular concept is that we find various religious groups, denominations, and creeds interpreting differently the exact definition of God's laws and ordained ways. In fact, almost every religious denomination places its own interpretation upon salvation, and what may be salvation under the definition of one may be doom and eternal punishment under the interpretation of another.

No doubt many have lived in small communities where the differences of opinion and beliefs of religious groups within that community were strong indeed and led to continued controversy. In fact, there are small communities about which it has been said that if only one church existed there would be no particular interest in living in that community as the sometimes heated discussions between the followers of different groups provided most of the community's gossip and news. I well remember living in a small community in the early part of my life. The total population was less than one thousand, and yet five religious denomina-

tions were struggling there, each with its house of worship and with its exclusive franchise, or so they thought, of the will of God. The bickerings and discussions which arose in the community on religious doctrine were, in a way, amusing as we look back on those days now.

Nevertheless, there is good in all religions and in all doctrinal interpretations of religion, and throughout the centuries religion has held forth in one form or another the appeal to man to change his ways to righteousness and to uphold an interpretation of a life which each group believed was the will of God. By the very purpose evidenced within the various doctrinal interpretations men have been made better, and even though some may have lived in a state of erroneous interpretation of the will of God, many lived sincerely and therefore were a credit and benefit to other men and an example of the change of life that can be made in an individual who turns from wrongdoing to good living.

It seems to me, however, that salvation with all the value that various doctrines can give it is not limited entirely to religious experience, although it will continue even to be an important part. Man's ability to prove that ideals, ethical principles and moral values, which have become more closely associated with the culture and civilization of those parts of the world looked upon as progressive, are enduring values and not merely veneer, might well be, at the present time, another consideration of man's salvation. This raises the question—Is man, after all, merely an animal that has been slightly refined? Are his concepts of moral, ethical, and social values merely conveniences for his selfish interests, or are they enduring qualities by which the human race will lead all other things and become, as various religious doctrines uphold, God's chosen people in every sense of the word?

When we look about the world in these dawning days of a new peace, we cannot help but question the purposes and activities of mankind. Can man find enduring peace in a world in which he harbors within himself envy, greed, and inconsistencies? As long as there are individuals who will make fortunes at the expense of other individuals, who will not be willing to arbitrate and compromise

for the good of the whole rather than for the selfish interest of a few individuals, can there be enduring peace? Are these things evidences of growth, culture, and civilization, or are they outcroppings of a nature within man that has never been truly conquered or adjusted. Surely, this brings closely to our consciousness the fact that true and direct peace must be within the aim and desire of the individual before it can exist in practice upon the part of nations which are, after all, nothing more than groups of individuals.

War and its atrocities have proved to us how degenerate man can become. These facts that have been repeated in our newspapers during and since the war have caused thinking men and women to ask—Are those who commit these atrocities human beings, or are they merely animals? If we are not to concede the fact that they are human beings, even though depraved, we are to shut the door toward future salvation and culture on the part of man. Above all, in reviewing history and man's attempt to gain a state of salvation, we can create hope for the future, based upon the practical proof of the effectiveness of the highest ethical moral standards which man has ordained, and, in many places, to which he has subscribed. We cannot select one period of history which is a chaos of war and point to the facts of a few who have deviated from these high standards, but we, at the same time, must never lose sight of the fact that the greatest task before us is to overcome the selfishness and greed of the objective mind of man if we are to have a civilization that is worth enduring.

We might conclude, then, with the idea that one salvation for man is through his being made to comprehend that which has true value. If man places all hope, ambition, and value in physical things, he will continue to interfere with the lives of others to achieve these things regardless of the consequences, but when man places complete value in the spiritual, or, we might say, in the eternal values that will endure after the physical is gone, then man has an aim that will cause him to see that there is greater value in working with and for the rest of a community rather than for his own possessions. Surely, a great burden is now placed upon religion and upon the ideals as taught by the Rosicrucians and other worthy organizations to direct man—in fact, all men as individuals—

to learn true values if a better world is to result.—A

Telepathy and Its Universal Use

A question comes from a Frater asking if telepathy will ever be a universal form of communication. The idea is intriguing in that it raises the question of whether man himself, without the aid of mechanical equipment, can eventually conquer a great part of the limitations that objective time and space put upon him. It is true that we have overcome many of these limitations in modern forms of communication and transportation, but all of them have been conquered by man's ingenuity and use of mechanical aids which have made it possible for him to communicate with other human beings at distances considered impossible even a comparatively few years ago.

Telepathy, of course, is not hindered by time or space. Telepathy is the process by which two people may become aware of the same thought regardless of their position in space or time. Directed telepathy is when one of two people, or more in some cases, purposely causes his own thought to come into the consciousness of another or into the consciousness of others. Commonly stated, telepathy is therefore transference of thought. However, this definition is very inadequate because the use of speech, and telephone or telegraph, is also no more or less than transference of thought. To be more exact, then, telepathy might be considered as transference of thought without mechanical or artificial means.

Insofar as telepathy coming into universal use, we are first faced with the question as to how much the process can be developed. Ordinarily, examples of telepathic communications that have been proved without a doubt to be true have been somewhat intermittent. In each of our individual experiences we find the use of telepathy the exception rather than the rule. As a result of our finding it in the category of the somewhat unusual or uncommon, we do not give it the development that is possible. For example, although we may have had a telepathic experience which proved without a doubt to be true, we classify it as extraordinary. We are proud of it; we may even brag about it, but it fails to be ap-

preciated in many cases. Telepathy could be, by proper use, an ordinary thing.

The method and procedure in the use of telepathy, as well as the techniques in proving it, need not be gone into here as their place is within the teachings of the organization. However, we can mention that if telepathy is to become a dependable factor in the lives of any of us it must be consistently cultivated. We must learn to depend upon its use and not look upon it as an unusual interruption of otherwise normal living. As long as we put upon it the emphasis of the unusual, telepathy will continue to be an undeveloped potentiality, merely something that happens once in a while. By having confidence in its development, by conscientiously attempting to use it, we will develop confidence in its effectiveness.

Someone may argue and rightfully point out that some of the examples of the evidence of telepathy have been under unusual conditions. Telepathic experiences have taken place in time of war, for example, when people under a highly emotional strain secured information telepathically which they might not have even anticipated at any other time. This is truly an out-of-the-ordinary experience, but there may be, far more than we realize, a connection between the emotions and telepathy itself of which we are not ordinarily objectively aware, and the emotional strain in itself may in some manner put the mind and body in a state or a position to be more susceptible to telepathic thought than in our ordinary day by day experiences. On the other hand, it has been proven that thought transference attempted under emotional strain has failed. This failure is due either to a misunderstanding of the process or the lack of aptitude, upon the part of the individual, to have developed the ability.

We have concluded here that telepathy is a possibility, that it can be developed. This leads to our fundamental question—Can telepathy become so common and dependable that it can replace all other forms of communication? The Frater who raises this question naturally is thinking that if all mechanical means of communication could be replaced by telepathy, how fortunate it would be in many ways. It would not be necessary to have or carry or resort to any kind of a mechanical arrangement or mechanism in

order to transfer ideas, messages, or thoughts. At first thought it seems like an ideal condition, although it might put out of business the telegraph and radio companies if this idea were carried to its fullest possible application. However, we are here overlooking the fact that everything has its particular place. There is not one form of communication that is reasonably supposed to be the means of displacing all other forms. For example, when man learned to write, did he replace speech with writing, or did he continue to speak as well? Or did the typewriter replace handwriting? It is true that the use of the typewriter has made poor penmen out of many of us, because we do not have to transfer our thoughts by writing, but it would be ridiculous to suppose that we would discontinue teaching a child to write merely because the typewriter was invented. Neither have the radio or wireless telegraphy replaced the mails or the telegraph. In other words, we know that in our daily lives all these things—writing, speech, typewriters, radio, telegraph, the mails—are important factors in modern communication and transference of thought. In my estimation, telepathy should be put upon an equal basis with all of these, and should be a means of transmission of thought, which is potentially resident in each of us, and should be developed. All things that have any permanent value to man are worth retaining; therefore, all forms of communication indicate man's potential abilities, and all, including telepathy, should be developed and utilized to their maximum capacity.—A

Influencing the Unborn Child

The question is often asked, Is prenatal influence more than a theory? To answer this, it is first necessary to have an understanding of what is meant by prenatal influence. Generally, it is the doctrine that the expectant mother can, by her thoughts and moods, influence the physical and psychic natures of her unborn child. In this article, we use the word *psychic* to mean the latent talents and personality of the unborn child. Successful prenatal influence would, therefore, result in a child expressing certain characteristics which had been molded by the mother during her pregnancy. The aim of the doctrine, expressed concisely, is to stimulate in the

unborn child certain tendencies which might otherwise remain dormant.

Like many doctrines, the doctrine of prenatal influence does not have an entirely objective pattern. In other words, all the details, by which it is said to be accomplished, are not observable. Some of the functions must be deduced from what are observable facts. Consequently, prenatal influence, so far as affecting the psychic qualities of the unborn child is concerned, has been subject to much controversy. In the past, staid or ultra-conservative physiologists and medical practitioners have decried its possibility. On the other hand, belief in the doctrine has its roots in antiquity.

Perhaps the first resort to these practices was among the ancient Greeks, who contended that an harmonious environment was not only conducive to the welfare of the pregnant mother, but also contributed to the temperament of the unborn child. The mother was isolated from all distractions; she was not permitted to worry, to become grieved, or to have any fears. It was further held that if the mother would cultivate or express her aesthetic tastes, this would have a corresponding effect upon the future aesthetic inclinations of the unborn child. The mother was encouraged to paint, to sing, or to play a musical instrument. In general, she was to express her artistic and creative talents. The physical needs of the mother were, of course, not neglected, but these were not thought to be the only consideration. The mind and emotional nature of the mother must also be catered to. If they were, it was held that it would be beneficial to the latent faculties of the unborn child.

It would appear that the ancient Greeks did not think they were influencing the soul of the unborn child. Rather it is indicated that they associated the aesthetic qualities or talents with certain organic functioning of the child. At least, a nervous, distracted, depressed mother would not, in their opinion, stimulate the development of the creative and mental processes in the unborn child. If improper diet on the part of the pregnant mother might cause the child to have poor teeth, likewise, then, anger and fear might cause a child to be wanting in lofty idealism and higher mental attributes.

Among the ancient Hebrews, the belief was prevalent that things, seen after con-

ception and during pregnancy, which affected deeply the emotions, would leave an indelible impression upon the offspring. This was carried to an extreme, amounting to a superstition. For example, take the following: "If a woman encounters a dog, her child will have an ugly dog-face; if she meets a donkey, it will be stupid; if she meets an ignorant lout, it will be an ignoramus." Conversely, a more intelligent principle was also stated and practiced: "The embryo is formed in consonance with the thoughts and emotions of the parents." It is obvious that the unthinking mind would make a superstition out of the doctrine of prenatal influence, just as it has corrupted many worthy concepts. The unthinking primitive mind believed that whatever the mother saw or heard that deeply affected her emotions left an exact impression upon the unborn child. In other words, if a mother were frightened by a snake, then, most assuredly, the child would either fear snakes or have an imprint of one as a birthmark on its body. This is a form of primitive reasoning known as homeopathic or sympathetic magic. It is the belief that what affects one of similar objects will be transmitted, by the bond of similarity, to the other. The belief that birthmarks resembling a certain form were caused by the mother's observing such an object in some intense emotional experience is still a prevalent superstition.

It is such tales as these which are popularly and erroneously associated with prenatal influence, and result in the prejudices which prevent an intelligent survey of the subject. The question naturally arises, In just what manner do the thoughts of the mother and her behavior affect the unborn child? It is particularly difficult to answer this question because even the purely physical doctrine of *heredity* is undergoing a transition. There is considerable controversy among certain schools of science as to whether or not talents and emotional traits are actually inherited. The principles underlying certain theories and facts of heredity are also related to the doctrine of prenatal influence. It is well, therefore, to touch upon these subjects of heredity and genetics.

At first it was believed that all the experiences of the parent which had a vital influence upon him would affect the offspring; that is, the experiences would be inherited as

characteristics. However, we know, as one biologist put it, that a man who has travelled extensively does not necessarily have a child who is familiar with geography. Inherited characteristics arise from *genes* in the reproductive cells. These genes are molecules of living substance. However, only certain conditions seem to cause mutation or change of these genes, and these variations are transmitted from the parent to the offspring. Furthermore, the new characteristics must be in the cells of the parent at the time of his birth. If the characteristics are not already in the cells of the parent, no matter what the parent may do during his lifetime, such characteristics would not be acquired and transmitted to his offspring, according to the theory. This would seem to almost remove the effect of environment on heredity. There are some authorities in genetics who contend that inherited characteristics are entirely due to the combination of different types of persons, and not the result of the behavior of the father or the mother.

Whether mind training, intensive study or exceptional use of the mental processes causes a mutation of genes that can be transmitted to offspring, has caused much debate. Experimentation would seem to prove that it does and this fact is important to the doctrine of prenatal influence. A number of white mice were selected for the test. They were placed in a cage separated from an accessible piece of cheese by several passageways. The cheese was visible to them. Eventually they would, after several attempts, find their way through the passageways to the cheese. They would become more and more conditioned, that is, experienced in locating the cheese. This constituted a *training* for the mice. Offspring of several generations of such mice, it is said, learned the way to reach the cheese more quickly than did those which were not offspring of the trained mice. Here, then, was environment causing inherited *mental* characteristics. In connection with heredity, the problem also arose as to how the inheritance of instincts and emotions could be explained. First, there was the question, Just what are the emotions? Do emotions originate in certain areas of the brain? Are there regions for each of the emotions; that is, places in the brain for the sensations of anger, fear, and so forth? If these regions are great in a parent, will they be transmitted as equal-

ly great emotional characteristics to the offspring?

James, the eminent psychologist, contended that emotions do not have separate plexuses or seats of origin in the brain. He asserted that emotional feeling is the result of being conscious of a *bodily change* produced by something we perceive. In other words, something greatly affects one of our sense organs. These impressions, in turn, affect the brain neurons and their connections. A reflex action is started by the neurons and causes a bodily change. We become conscious of the bodily change and these feelings are called *emotions*. For thousands of generations certain bodily changes, and their reflexes, have caused a mutation or alteration of the paths of the brain cells. To use an analogy, it is like water running over a rock in exactly the same place for a great number of years. Eventually, a groove or path is formed which the water will always follow. That path is *inherited*. The path becomes the common emotions which we all have. Individuals having a large path or exceptional emotional temperament transmit that characteristic in the genes of their reproductive cells to their offspring.

The connections of neurons or nerve cells which underlie anger and fear are just as much a structure as the color of the eye. Each individual inherits the receptor and effector characteristics of the cells of his parents. If a person is able, according to this principle, to control his reflexes, his reaction to those things which cause emotional feeling, he actually is causing a variant which can be transmitted to his offspring. Consequently, a person who compels himself to conform to a certain behavior is causing a mutation of his neurons. His offspring should reflect such characteristics. Cannot, therefore, the mother, who exposes herself to certain emotions induced, for example, by music, poetry or art, cause an effect upon the neurons of her unborn child which is still in an embryonic and formative stage?

One of the principal objections raised to this proposition is that the embryo lives within the mother as a parasite. It is contained within the amnion, a thin transparent sac filled with fluid. This sac is for protective reasons. The liquid equalizes pressure on the embryo from all sides and acts like a buffer. Nourishment passes from the moth-

er's blood by a process of seepage, known as *diffusion*, through the tissue to the embryo. The embryo accepts the food and blood and develops according to its own hereditary condition, it is held. It is thought that there is no connection between the maternal and the fetal (that of the unborn child) blood. On the other hand, the same physiologists admit that *antibodies* do get through from the mother's blood to the vascular (blood) system of the embryo. These antibodies are the protective agencies that nature puts into the embryo during pregnancy to prevent the child from being affected by any diseases the mother may acquire. In effect, this is nature's way of *inoculating* the unborn child to protect it from contamination before birth.

Granted that seepage or diffusion prevents the blood of the mother reaching the embryo, it is admitted that oxygen and food elements reach it. As Rosicrucians, we know of the "A" element which is inhaled and brought into the lungs by breathing and which energizes the blood like a magnetic charge. This Cosmic potential and vital force radiates in every cell of the blood. We know, and it is a physical fact, that oxygen and this energy reach our blood by being diffused through a membrane in the lungs. If this "A" element or *nous* can be diffused thus, it can likewise be diffused, *with its intelligence*, from the mother's blood through the tissues in which the embryo is retained. The cells of the human system are like minute radio stations. Vibrations are emanating from them continually. Their emanations or vibrations are affected by our thinking and behavior (reflexes as explained) and by our eating and breathing. These radiations, then, must have a *corresponding* effect upon the blood cells and the neurons of the embryo.

It is a common experience that emotional and instinctive reflexes produce stimuli which cause changes in our blood pressure, our pulse rate, our salivary and gastric secretions and in the electrical conditions of the body. Fear, for example, causes our mouths to become dry. Excitement, affecting the digestion, causes nausea. Experimentation has been made to find the changes which may accompany what we call pleasant and unpleasant. In other words, when something is very pleasant to us, investigation has been made to determine how that may affect our gland secretions, blood pressure, et cetera.

As a further example, a current has been passed through a circuit, including a galvanometer, and a person's body. A deflection was apparent in the galvanometer when the subject was stimulated in various ways. Thus, words that aroused anger showed changes in the electrical conditions of the body.

The adrenal glands lie just ahead of the kidneys. Nerve fibres from the *sympathetic nervous system* are connected to them. They pour their secretion, adrenalin, directly into the blood stream. Anger and fear stimulate these glands through the sympathetic nervous system. Adrenalin in the blood drives the blood from the viscera (abdominal region) to the muscles. It likewise decreases muscular fatigue. These things, then, the emotions can do. If they can so affect the physical organs and glands of the mother, it is apparent that such alterations must also affect the radiations of her cells. Such effects, in turn, will be transmitted through the membranous wall surrounding the embryo or the unborn child. These radiations must cause mutation or changes in the neuron connections being developed in the embryo. They would cause paths to be established that will result in a sensitivity to certain emotional states.

We do not mean to imply by the foregoing that a mother, who devotes time each day during pregnancy to reading classical poetry so as to keep her thoughts lofty and engender certain emotions, is going to give birth to another Browning or another Walt Whitman. In fact, the child may never have any inclination toward poetry, but he will have a greater aesthetic taste than otherwise. This taste may be expressed in music or art or in some other accelerated creative enterprise. Let it also be understood that for prenatal influence to be effective, much time must be devoted to it and the mother must religiously devote at least two or three hours daily to such psychic and aesthetic pursuits. They must be pursuits that she really enjoys. They must produce within her a deep emotional feeling. Otherwise, the stimuli will not be effective of results. It matters not whether the mother, for example, is proficient at playing a musical instrument. What is important is that she *loves* to do so and plays enough to be moved emotionally. Painting, singing, reading good literature, all these contribute to the same purpose.

General science is not altogether unappreciative of prenatal influence. In modern times, the first prenatal clinic (called antenatal) was begun by Dr. J. W. Ballantyne. It was established in the Edinburgh Royal Maternity Hospital. In 1915 a definite plan for antenatal clinics was established. It was, however, for the *physical* care of the expectant mother and child. By 1926 there were nearly eight hundred such clinics in England and Wales alone. Today these clinics are, consequently, confined only to talks to the expectant mother on dental hygiene, proper diet, clothing to be worn and the best care of the child's physical needs.

The Child Culture Institute of San Jose, California, is today the only organization concerned with prenatal development of the mental faculties and latent talents within the unborn child. In a sense, the Child Culture Institute has become a vast clinic with "patients" all over the world. Several thousand mothers in every civilized land of the world, who have followed its instructions, can vouch for the principles it teaches. They have had demonstrated in the lives of their children the effects of their own thoughts during the period of pregnancy. The efforts they have put forth in prenatal training is like bread cast upon the water. It has come back to them multifold in the blessing of a child *inwardly* beautiful.—X

What is a Good Book?

It is not infrequent that a member or friend inquires of the Order, or of many of us as individuals, to recommend merely a "good book." Such a recommendation is very difficult to make as it is only logical that what may constitute a good book for one person may be extremely boring to another. Therefore, it is worth our consideration as to just what does constitute a good book.

Naturally, the first principles upon which judgment of a good book may be made is whether or not its content appeals to our individual interest. If a person likes history, then the selection of books has been narrowed; or conversely, if a person has no interest in history, then the books on that subject will immediately be eliminated in the consideration of favorable reading material. Interest, therefore, is the first criterion of a good book. Then, we must go another step.

Not every book on subjects in which we are interested may be called a good book. The book must meet certain other qualifications. It must advance the subject in which we are interested in a manner which we enjoy following. There is one basis by which a book is sometimes judged, and that is—is it worth rereading? If we find a book upon the subject in which we are interested and we find the reading of it enjoyable as well as informative sufficiently so that from time to time we return to that book to reread it, it has certainly met the test of a good book. If we apply this basis to the judgment of good books, we will be somewhat surprised if we think back in our own experiences and remember how many books we would really consider good books. In other words, ask yourself the question as to the number of times you have read through a certain book, whether to reread it in whole or in part. There are few books that meet such a standard.

On the other hand, those that do meet this qualification are really worth while. Probably the one book more than any other that has met this standard is the Bible. It still is one of the world's best sellers. Another book (published by the Rosicrucians), which may be turned to time and time again, is *Unto Thee I Grant*. Of course it is the purpose of the Supreme Council of the Order to make all books offered by the Rosicrucian Supply Bureau to qualify as near as possible as being good books on subjects of metaphysics, mysticism, and science, as well as philosophy, so that they may become as companions to an individual who is interested in these subjects and may be referred to time and time again.

There are other books that have stood what we might call the test of time. They are the classics that seem to stand out from all literature and are read, as well as enjoyed, by generation after generation. It is hard to define just what it is in these particular books, particularly those in the category of fiction, that keeps them constantly new and of interest. Probably those fiction books that have stood severe tests against criticism and time have done so because the incidents given in them are closely coupled with emotional experiences that are fundamental and timeless. In other words, we find in certain books the experiences of human beings, such

as ourselves, related in such manner that a sympathetic, somewhat subjective, understanding seems to exist between us, as the readers, and the characters of the book.

It is very difficult to state exactly all other factors that contribute to the permanency of good literature, but it must be acknowledged, from these examples, that there are certain standards that consciously or unconsciously appeal to everyone. Today we have reached a point in civilization where the publication of books has been developed to a fine point. Books are so economically priced that the world's best literature is available to almost any individual. Furthermore, in this country one of the best public library systems exists, through which almost every person has access, without any charge whatsoever, to the best in reading matter. It is a challenge to our modern world that we make use of such literature. In other words, we have the opportunity of referring to the best in literature of all ages preceding us. Our obligation is to use this constructively.

In addition, there exist many book clubs. Naturally, these clubs try to appeal to a wide variety of reading interests and most of their selections are fiction. However, their services are such that they review many books and help keep abreast of the times those who read with sincerity. Furthermore, the book-review sections of the leading newspapers of the country are well edited, so we have before us a vast panorama of contemporary literature in addition to the reserves of the past. Use this opportunity well. It is a heritage and truly a privilege to be able freely to choose what you will read and make your own decisions as to what, after all, is a good book.—A

The 1946 Rosicrucian Convention and University

News of the end of the war was soon followed by questions from our members regarding whether or not there would be a convention in 1946 and a regular term of the Rose-Croix University. We are very happy to announce that all restrictions upon conventions imposed by the Government during the war have been lifted and there definitely will be a 1946 Rosicrucian convention.

The year 1945 was the first in many years in which a Rosicrucian convention was not

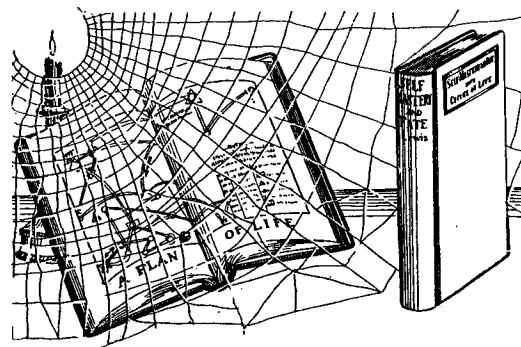
held. It was with keen disappointment that the officers and the members of the organization announced the cancellation of the convention plans last spring. Conventions were held in 1942, 1943, and 1944, in spite of the war, because the Rosicrucian conventions were not classified as entertainment, but had become an integral part of the Order's educational activities, and proved definitely beneficial to the well-being of those who could attend.

It is now our plan to make the 1946 Rosicrucian convention a successor worthy of those held in the past. Some plans for 1945 were already under way prior to the time of the cancellation. These plans will be continued and enlarged upon, and we are looking forward to having a convention program that will interest every member of the Order who finds it possible to journey to San Jose for the week of July 7 to 13 of next year.

The Rosicrucian convention is open to all members. There are, of course, some classes held for specific degrees, but more than three-fourths of all the activities during the session are for everyone who is present. Further announcements will appear from time to time, and we urge all members to consider the possibility of supporting the 1946 convention with their attendance. Let us compensate for this year's loss by making the 1946 convention the largest and best in the history of this jurisdiction.

Attendance at the University requires advance preparation. A booklet, *The Story of Learning*, describes all the University courses and the requirements for registration. If you believe that you might be able to attend, we suggest that you communicate immediately with the Registrar of the Rose-Croix University, secure a copy of *The Story of Learning*, and proceed with your plans now so that if the occasion arises you will be eligible to register. Every year there are members who come here a few days prior to the opening of the University term and are very disappointed because they cannot register since they failed to make preliminary arrangements. Do not find yourself in this position. Make those arrangements whether or not you are positive that you can attend, and then should the occasion develop you will be ready to be a part of the Rose-Croix University student body.—A

THE
PLAN OF
YOUR LIFE—

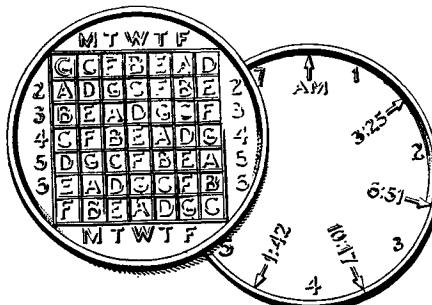


With the Flip of a Coin!

THE flip of a coin many times constitutes the decision for a course of action. This simple act has moved armies, precipitated wars, started great industrial ventures. It is, however, an act devoid of careful thought or reason, and an indication of lack of will. Such a method of deciding important problems is subject to the unsound element of so-called chance. The book *Self Mastery and Fate with the Cycles of Life*, which thousands have read and used daily, proves what economists and scientists know—that there is a periodicity in human and natural events. In life there are fortunate and unfortunate hours for every act. We are pleased to introduce to the readers of this book a *simple coin* based on the charts of the book which at a single glance reveals the hourly periods—accurately, mathematically true. One glance at this coin informs the reader of the nature of the daily periods governing his life—not an amulet or lucky (?) piece.

Can You Afford To Be Without It?

This handy coin can be carried in the pocket. It is ever-ready to reveal the tendencies of the cycles affecting you. Accompanying the coin is a little pamphlet fully explaining the things to avoid during certain periods, or the profitable periods that await you. Every reader of the above book should possess this practical coin. If you have not the book, write for free descriptive folder. If you have, SECURE THE COIN AND PAMPHLET TODAY.



The coin is made of a light weight, strong alloy. One side contains the days and periods, the other the hours of the day divided into A M and P M, and indicating the periods. Accompanying the coin is a pamphlet giving explanation of the importance of each period, and instructions for use of the coin.

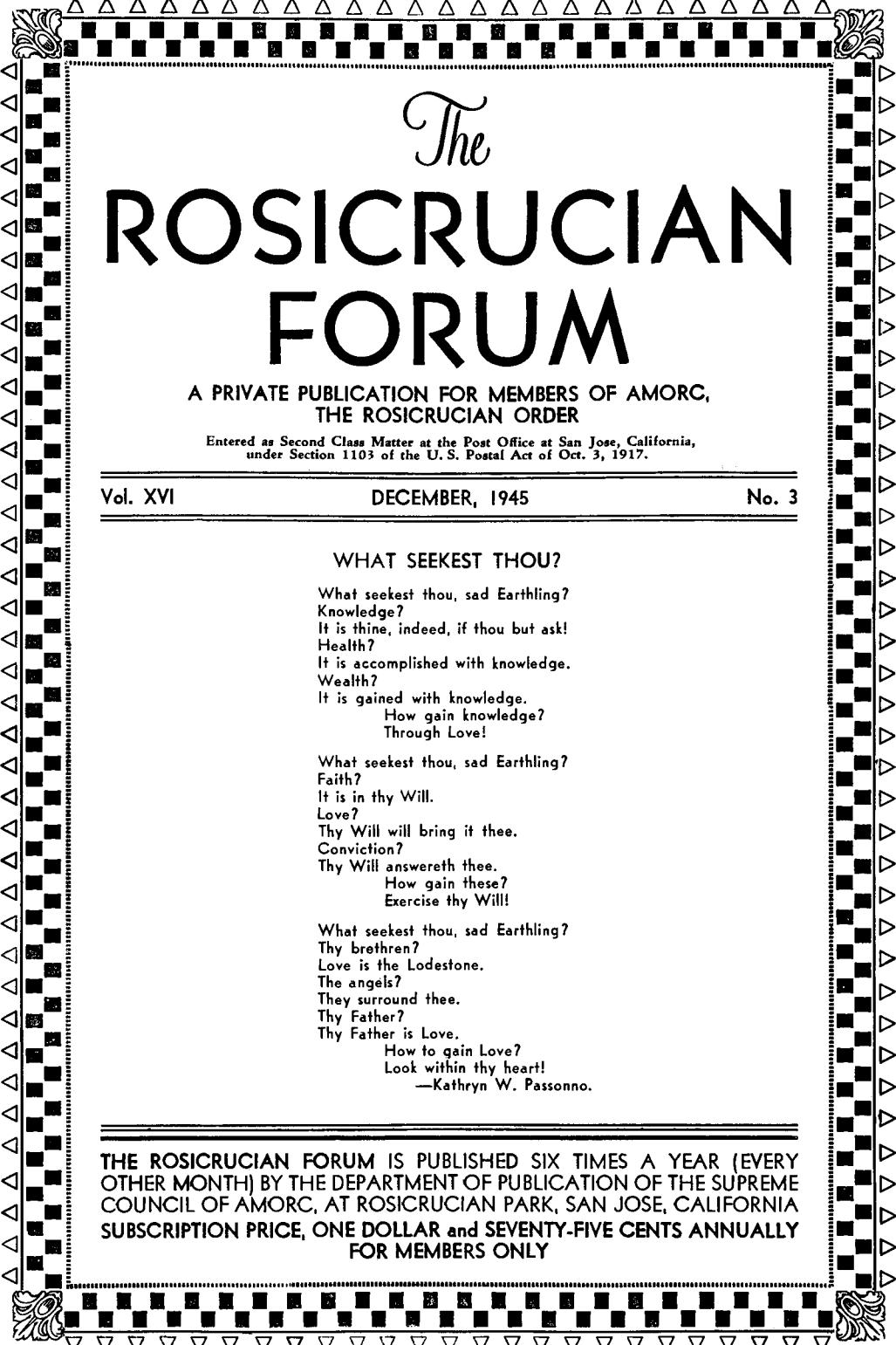
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No. 3

WHAT SEEKEST THOU?

What seekest thou, sad Earthling?
Knowledge?
It is thine, indeed, if thou but ask!
Health?
It is accomplished with knowledge.
Wealth?
It is gained with knowledge.
How gain knowledge?
Through Love!

What seekest thou, sad Earthling?
Faith?
It is in thy Will.
Love?
Thy Will will bring it thee.
Conviction?
Thy Will answereth thee.
How gain these?
Exercise thy Will!

What seekest thou, sad Earthling?
Thy brethren?
Love is the Lodestone.
The angels?
They surround thee.
Thy Father?
Thy Father is Love.
How to gain Love?
Look within thy heart!
—Kathryn W. Passonno.

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Greetings!



Dear Fratres and Sorores:

War makes particularly conspicuous the paradoxical use of prayer. The peoples of the involved nations—friends and enemies alike—enter their temples of worship and solemnly pray that they might be victorious. Frequently, peoples of the same faith in opposing nations are praying in like manner to the same conceived god. Obviously, both peoples believe they are justified in their respective causes. Consequently, to the sincere religionist of a defeated country, it must seem that his god has forsaken him, or that, at least, prayer has lost its efficacy. It is this circumstance that has confused many religionists and caused many other persons to regard prayer as being contiguous to superstition.

The value of prayer is directly proportionate to the manner in which it is used. Prayer, in itself, as an act or a series of acts, is not infallible. Prayer consists of a number of such elements as: to whom we pray, how and when we pray, and what we pray for. Unless these elements are integrated rightly, prayer must of necessity fail. However, no matter how often a prayer may not be productive of the intended results, certain beneficial results are experienced; such is an example of using nearly all of the elements correctly, which we shall later explain.

From the rational point of view, prayer is a petition. Like any kind of request, it may either be made silently, or be vocative. When emotionally moved, it is instinctive to give voice to our desires. The voice has power in its utterances. The sound of the voice relieves the emotions. It suggests the invoking of the force of the desire—physically as well as mentally. In fact, it is nearly impossible to prevent a vocative response accompanying intense emotional agitation. We are inclined to cry out, or speak out, under such circumstances.

If prayer is a petition, there must be something or someone to whom it is directed. Ob-

viously, we do not pray to ourselves, that is, to our own mental or physical being. If we believe that we are intellectually and physically capable of executing a plan, or acquiring something, we proceed entirely according to our own initiative. Prayer is, therefore, an admission of an actual or imagined *self-insufficiency*. This self-insufficiency causes a tendency in the individual to turn outward, to put dependency upon a force, agency, or source, which is external to himself. Patently, our conception of this external source determines to a large degree, the nature of our prayer. A primitive being with a polytheistic conception imagines a plurality of gods; to him, such gods may be resident in inanimate things, as rocks, the sea, or in storm clouds. In his conception, each of such gods is distinctively productive of certain needs of man. Thus, the individual has to evaluate his gods—to one he turns for health, to another for strength, to still another for support against his enemies.

When man seeks to communicate with a power vaster than himself, he devises various means of gaining the attention of such a deity. For example, when men call upon a human potentate, or tribal head, it is necessary to have the potentate disposed to their ends; consequently they seek to propitiate him by a presentation of gifts, the gifts being whatever men consider of value. Sometimes, the approach to the god is the attempt to create a favorable environment in which the deity may receive them. Thus, theurgical rites of music, song and dance, are used. In following this method of prayer, two things are observed: first, there is the belief that the deity may grant the request, if he is sufficiently pleased with the acts of the petitioner; second, there is no question of the motive of the petitioner. It is not a question as to whether the results of the prayer are contrary to natural law or as to whether they may work an injustice upon other mortals. The psychology in such instances is very crude. It is, in reality, conferring an *an-*

thropomorphic nature upon the god. God is conceived as being like mortals, possessed of vanity, easily gratified by gifts, homage, and ostentation. He is further conceived as being capable of dispensing his gifts or conferring his powers, just as some earthly absolute king—without regard to reason or justice. Each man can, consequently, obtain whatever he wishes from the god if he is able to perform the proper theurgical rites. Men thus vie with each other to gain the *secrets* of how best to *influence* the gods. It is this kind of misconception that has encouraged priesthoods from the earliest known society. Priests were men believed to possess or to be trained in the proper way to invoke the pleasure of the gods for men's benefit.

Though we speak of this practice as being primitive, yet this elementary idea has persisted down through the ages greatly to influence the dogmas and creeds of many religions extant today. A religious sect may decree a certain mode of behavior upon the part of the individual. It may decree that you must drop coins into a box, you must regularly attend certain ceremonies, you must repeat specific creeds and enter into authorized rites. If you comply, it is presumed that you have appeased God, or made the proper approach, and that the deity will incline his will toward the fulfillment of the prayer offered. I do not need to designate the sects who encourage these practices; they are known to you, being common in your community. These peoples, then, pray in good faith and are, of course, most often disappointed in the results and frequently disillusioned as well.

There is still another orthodox conception of prayer, which, though it transcends the previous example, is yet quite primitive and potentially a failure. It continues to recognize a personal god as exercising an arbitrary will, *but* he does so for beneficial reasons. The individual confers upon his god not only the power of accomplishment but the highest moral value of which he is able to conceive. In other words, it is believed that the god is capable of anything, but will only do that which is in accord with *moral good*. This type of religionist, then, will not petition his god to grant his prayer if it conflicts with, or is contrary to, what he conceives as morally right. He will not ask his god to strike another person dead or to give him money

which he should not have. However, this religionist will have no hesitancy in asking the fulfillment of a prayer which he thinks just, no matter how contrary it may be to the necessity of universal, or Cosmic, order. He would not hesitate to ask God to stop a war which men themselves have brought on. Psychologically, to such individuals, god is believed arbitrarily to exercise his will as against the very laws and causes he himself has established—if man in good faith and with moral purpose asks it.

The illogicalness of such prayer never occurs to the petitioner. He may pray for his god to stop what another religionist, in equally good faith, is praying to be continued. The fall weather in California affords an excellent example of such an anthropomorphic conception of god and prayer. In late September the California prune growers are drying their fruit in the sun; an early and continued rain might prove very ruinous to their crop. Conversely, the cattle raisers at that time of the year are desperately in need of rain for pasturage, especially after the long rainless California summer. A cattleman, if he were one of the religionists we have been speaking of, would pray for rain; concomitantly, a prune grower would pray that it would *not* rain. If God were to exercise *arbitrary will*, opposing the natural law of climatic conditions, whose prayer would He favor? Such a religionistic view places the deity in a ludicrous position and makes religion vulnerable to atheism. If the Divine will could and would function arbitrarily, it would disrupt all Cosmic unity. There would be no dependency whatsoever. It is because Cosmic laws perform consistently and are immutable by the necessity of their nature that man has an assurance of dependability of the Divine or Cosmic principles.

The mystic's conception and practice of prayer is not only the most productive of results but it is the most logical method as well. The mystic avers that all things are possible within the Divine consciousness of God except that which would oppose the very nature of God. Since the Divine Mind is all things, there is nothing which can oppose it. Therefore, a negative request or petition, remains nugatory. One should not expect to find, for example, darkness in light, for where there is light there cannot be

darkness; thus the mystic does not ask for the impossible in his prayers. A mystic never asks for the setting aside of a Cosmic, or natural law, which he may have invoked by his own acts, whether due to malice or to ignorance. He is a firm believer in *cause and effect*. He realizes that to ask that a law, invoked by himself, be mitigated in his favor would be requesting the impossible.

A mystic does not ask that there be conferred upon him special blessings. He knows that in the Cosmic scheme there are no preferred mortals. Further, he is quite cognizant that everything already is, or will be, by the eternal law of change. There is nothing held back. In the laws of the Cosmic, everything consistent thereto can eventually be brought about by the *mind* of man. Things are not transmitted to man, rather it is man that directs and assembles the Cosmic powers to which he has access, in order to bring them about. The mystic does not ask for a completed particular, but rather for the *illumination* whereby it might be materialized through his efforts; or, if his desire for a particular is not proper, he may ask that the desire be removed from him. Knowing the limitation of his own objective self, the mystic asks that if he cannot be shown how to satisfy his need, that he be shown how to rid himself of the false desire which causes him to think it necessary. The mystic thus proves that he does not insist that his purposes are infallible. He likewise indicates he wants to be certain that he does no other person an injustice by his desires through requesting something he should not. The mystic realizes that with proper understanding, many of the things we now pray for would lose their importance to us and would be shown to be insignificant and unworthy of a Divine appeal. Many of the things with which we torment ourselves, and regard as being so essential to our welfare, are so because they have not been analyzed in the light of their broader aspect, namely, their relation to the whole Cosmic plan.

The mystic, in petitioning the Cosmic, turns his consciousness *inward* instead of directing his plea to a distant external entity or power. The Cosmic is in him, the mystic realizes; it is not just in the reaches of space. He knows, further, that his Soul will answer his petition. The Soul is of the Cosmic and

it will guide him to *self-action*. Prayer, to the mystic, is really a *consultation* between the two selves of man. It is an appeal from the mortal mind to the immortal mind of Self within. The answer to a prayer is, the mystic knows, actually an insight into Divine wisdom through proper attunement. The mystic thence is able properly to evaluate his desires and he is able to act in the light of what is Cosmically right and possible.

When a mystic asks for something which is not forthcoming, he experiences none of the disappointment which the religionist feels after his unfulfilled prayers. Whether or not the particulars are forthcoming the mystic has nevertheless received an *understanding* which has disclosed to him the unnecessary-ness of his appeal. Prayer, therefore, is always satisfying to the mystic. Psychologically as well, prayer is beneficial to any man if it is mystically practiced. Prayer requires humility. It requires submission to the better side of our nature. It puts us *en rapport* with the more subtle impulses of our being.

Prayers are usually of three kinds. There are prayers of *confession* when man indicates to the god of his heart that he is contrite and admits a violation of his moral ideals. Then, there are prayers of *intercession*; these are prayers in which man asks to be guided so as to prevent undesired effects of certain causes. There are also prayers of *gratitude*, like those of the Psalms where man hails the majesty of the Divine and expresses joy in realizing his own Divine nature. Of these three kinds, the mystic indulges the latter—the prayer of gratitude—more frequently. In doing so, the mystic avoids the necessity of the other two. If we recognize the Divine, and commune periodically with Self, which is of it, we acquire such personal mastery of our own being that prayers of intercession or prayers of confession are not required.

The following is a prayer embodying all of the mystical elements that we have just enumerated:

May the divine essence of the Cosmic cleanse me of all impurities of mind and body that I may commune with the Cathedral of the Soul. May my mortal consciousness be so enlightened that any imperfections of my thinking may be revealed to me, and

may I be given the power of will to correct them. I humbly petition that I may perceive the fullness of nature and partake thereof, ever consistent with the Cosmic good. So Mote it Be!

Fraternally,
RALPH M. LEWIS,
Imperator

Is A.M.O.R.C. a Religion?

In one of the Forums conducted by the members of AMORC at the Thebes Minor Lodge in Detroit, the question was asked: "Why does the Rosicrucian Order declare and advertise that it is not a religious organization when its teachings have such a bearing on the soul of man?"

It is quite true that in our literature and public advertisements we stress the statement that the Rosicrucian Order is *not* a religious organization. In the strictest sense of the term, the Rosicrucian Order is truly not a religious sect. It has no churches, nor does it try to supplant any existing churches. The principle objective of the Order is not the worship of God. The manner of worshiping God is left entirely to the individual. Further, the Rosicrucian Order, unlike a religious sect, has no high ecclesiastic councils who decree what is the moral content of good; in other words, we do not prescribe a dogmatic creed nor do we define what are minor and major sins which must be avoided by members. The Rosicrucian Order ordains no priests, has no rabbis, or clergymen through whom salvation may be obtained or explained. Further, the Rosicrucian Order, unlike most religions, does not declare itself to be an intermediary between man and his god. It does not hold that offenses against itself, its Constitution, and its rules, are also offenses against God. It does not profess that its teachings are direct revelations from a Divine mind, whereas this is a fundamental law of most religious sects.

The Rosicrucian Order is a philosophic fraternity—a *school of life*. It has an inheritance of wisdom that has come down through the ages. Each period, including the present one, makes its contributions to this font of knowledge. The Rosicrucian Order seeks to promulgate a way of life, a philosophy of living. Religion, on the other hand, is primarily interested in the soul-life of

man—the origin, nature, purpose, and the obligations of the soul. The Rosicrucian Order is equally interested in the Cosmos as a whole; it is concerned with all of the mysteries, so-called, of man's body, the phenomena of the heavens and of the earth, the nature of life, health and mind. Eighty-five per cent of the subject matter of the Rosicrucian teachings is strictly outside of the conventional jurisdictions of religion.

The question asked above, infers that we are a religion because our "teachings have such a bearing on the soul of man." Then, for like reasons, we should be called a "school of psychology" because our teachings have such a bearing on consciousness, mind, habit, imagination, and the like. Furthermore, why should we not be called, as well, a school of physical science; for after all, our teachings have such a bearing upon electrons, atoms, molecules, magnetism, the propagation of waves and similar subjects of physics—simply put, if a consideration of the soul makes us a religion, then, likewise, our consideration of atoms and the spinal nervous system ought to make us a scientific organization. The fact of the matter is that this kind of reasoning on the part of an individual is fallacious. The Rosicrucian teachings are a number of integrated subjects comprising a complete philosophy. It is highly inconsistent to select any one phase of the teachings and thereby judge the nature of the whole organization.

It is true that we have rituals and ceremonies but they are purely of an initiatory and fraternal nature. They are not intended to cultivate any sectarian or religious pursuits.

There are courses in some of the great universities which are devoted to comparative religions and theology; in these courses are studied the various religious and philosophic conceptions of soul and of God. I do not believe that persons would be justified in describing such universities as religious because their curricula included such studies. It is not *what* one studies that designates a religious affiliation, but the *purpose* of his study. An individual may decide to make his Rosicrucian studies a *personal religion*. He might extract from our teachings certain ideas which he had crystallized into his conception of God; he might formulate a code of ethics and morals from our teachings,

which he would conceive of as the only reliable means of obtaining spiritual understanding. Through doing these things, he has made of Rosicrucianism a religion unto himself; but, in fact, it is not so intended. However, a rank materialist may do likewise. One believing in a strictly naturalistic world, a world of forces and energy only, may so devote himself to his ends and so cause them to become supreme in his consciousness that he would measure all right and wrong and the whole purpose of the universe and himself, by such ends. In so believing and acting, he would create a religion from his science. But no one could possibly contend because he did so, that a thorough-going naturalism was in itself a religion.

Of late years, we have found it quite necessary to stress in all our public announcements that we are "not a religious organization." To the man in the street, even many newspaper writers, subjects concerning the personality, the mind, infinite intelligence, nature of the soul and morality, are all "religious" topics. He is, of course, absolutely wrong. The study of ancient and modern philosophy, metaphysics, and psychology are quite replete with these same subjects; however, the man on the street comes to hear of these subjects only in connection with religion or church activities, for it is with these that he has more frequent association. Consequently, whenever he sees these subjects listed or referred to, or hears such terminology, he immediately surmises that they have reference to some religion. He is, in fact, admitting his own ignorance of the various other literary sources where these same terms appear. By associating these terms only with religion he is actually saying: I have never read philosophy, I have never studied psychology, I know nothing of mysticism, and therefore I do not know that these terms belong equally to those fields as well as to religion.

There are many persons who are hungry for what the Rosicrucian Order has to offer. They have not read works on philosophy, mysticism, or metaphysics. It is only in orthodox religious circles that they have heard reference to the inner nature and power of man. Having outgrown those orthodox conceptions, they do not know exactly where to turn. Some leaflet or advertisement of AMORC awakens a response within them;

however, the terms used in the leaflet or advertisement are reminiscent of their former religious associations. Obviously they wish to be certain that they are not once again becoming a part of an orthodox religious sect. To assure them that such is not the case, we stress the phrase: "Not a Religious Organization."—X

Does the Cosmic Decree Transition?

A soror of the State of Virginia asks our Forum, "Why believe that the Cosmic wills our transition if mere man can change it?" The same soror further states, "I simply cannot reconcile present-day catastrophes—the sinking of shiploads at once, the cremating and gassing of thousands at once, etc.—with the teachings that the Cosmic wills our time to depart this life. I have questioned this before but did not have a satisfactory explanation."

These questions resolve into one; namely, if the Cosmic exercises *will* and directs the affairs of man, can man oppose the will of the Cosmic with his own? In my opinion, the term *will* of God, or *will* of the Cosmic, is a misnomer. First, it does not convey the true function of the Cosmic Mind; second, it causes an idea to be had with which it is often impossible to reconcile the experiences of every day. Ordinarily when men refer to the *will* of God, they use the word in the same sense as the human *will*. It is a conception of the faculty of preference, the ability arbitrarily to choose between alternate things or acts. The conferring of this human faculty upon the Cosmic Mind, or God, is actually a human weakness. It is an inheritance of a very primitive thought. It is that interpretation of God known technically as *anthropomorphism*, which means a god that is manlike.

Man's evolution of the idea of God has, to an extent, kept abreast of his own intellectual and physical development. When man had little or no knowledge of natural law, when the most simple phenomena such as lightning, sunrise and sunset were great mysteries to him, God then was identified with such phenomena. In fact, anything superior to man's power—and understanding—was apotheosized, that is, conceived as a deity of some kind. Psychologically, the premise was that God is any *power* or *source*

greater than man. Man did not necessarily conceive such gods as being beneficent or particularly concerned with the welfare of himself; in fact, man did not love such gods and often he did not believe that they loved him. He was imbued with a fearsome respect for their ubiquitous power, just as a small boy looks at a giant steam locomotive with intermingled feelings of fear and admiration.

Slowly man mastered many of the things which he once feared. He was finally able to control almost all living things. Many things not directly subject to his control, like the elements, he came to understand. The understanding removed the dread fear of them. This gradual supremacy which he acquired he rightly attributed to the power of his own mind. It was his ability to *reason* and to *think* that was making man a master of his environment. He was conscious that therein was his greatest asset. Notwithstanding his advance, man has likewise been conscious of certain continued limitations. Also, his admiration has grown for the magnitude of the universe as he perceives it. There was existing in this universe so self-evident a skill, far exceeding his own prowess, that man's conception of God, his ideal of the Supreme Power, was thus transcended. God, of course, must exceed man. Man's greatest asset is not muscular strength but mind. Therefore God, man believed, must be a being that exercised mind but to a far vaster extent. The anthropomorphic conception of God became a being that *thinks, reasons, and wills*.

Since man creates what he wills, men believed that their God did likewise. Each thing that is, is contended by many religionists to be the result of a divine decree—an expression of will. Men are quite well aware that they are prompted to exercise their will because of desires which they have, especially desires of a mental nature. Desires which are directly of the body, as the appetites, do not require will to enforce them. A normal person does not need to will himself, for example, to eat or to drink. The mentality, however, creates *artificial desires*. We have moods or inclinations which are the sum total of our thinking and of our feeling. These become mental desires or preferences. They are often so impelling that we choose them in opposition to an appetite.

Many times we refuse to eat when hungry, simply because we have some mental desire, some purpose which so occupies us that we do not wish to take time to eat. Again there are those who, for analogy, go on hunger strikes. They choose an *ideal* or a mental desire instead of a bodily appetite.

When men ascribe will to God, they are thus conferring upon Him desires. The question then arises, What kind of desires would God have or *need*? If the Cosmic Mind or God is self-sufficient, constituting the whole of being, desire could not be experienced. A condition of plethora is usually attributed to the Divine state. This plethora is a *fullness*. A Divine desire would be an indication of a lack in the Cosmic. Can God lack anything requiring Him to will—to prefer—something apart from His own nature? Further, if something could be desired by the Cosmic or God, from whence would it come? It would have to be desired because it is not in God's nature. Therefore, from where would it be acquired? If everything must come from the *One*, out of the Cosmic being, then it must be apparent that there would be no desire for something which already is.

It is but a polemic and circumlocutory discussion to counter by saying God's will is not a desire or a preference for things but a wish that His *purpose* be fulfilled. To declare that God must *will* man to do this or to do that infers that there is an alternate way; namely, that man can escape from the Cosmic plan and be or do something else. This ascribing of purpose to God, that is, his will that something shall come to be or shall be, is an atavistic idea—it is a going back to a time when primitive man conceived that there is also a malevolent power or intelligence in the universe. This they called by various names. Today this being is conceived of in orthodox circles as Satan. It was believed that there was a Divine struggle with Satan for supremacy in the Cosmos. Each, God and Satan, had final ends or purposes they sought. It was God's will to achieve His ends and Satan sought to enforce his own objectives.

If God has a purpose which He must will—that is, choose—and toward which all creation is evolving, it is an indication of the lack of perfection of the Cosmic. It would mean that God has not yet attained His final and perfect state. I am reminded of the

splendid words of Spinoza with respect to this thought: "The latter appear to affirm that there is something external to God and independent of Him, upon which, as upon a pattern, God looks when He acts, or at which He aims as at a definite goal. This is simply subjecting God to fate, and nothing more absurd than this can be maintained concerning God, who is the first and only free cause, as well as the essence of all things as of their existence."

"God is the essence of all things as of their existence" means that all laws, all phenomena in their primary state, always have been and are of God. The way things are and will be is *now* the full and perfect plan of the Cosmic, from which nothing can escape. That something shall happen one way and something else another way does not signify an arbitrary fiat or expression of God. It is merely that the effects are different because the causes have varied. That some men shall die today and others pass through transition tomorrow does not mean that the Cosmic has willed a specific time of transition for each. It is part of the great Cosmic Order that humans have a certain amount of flexibility in the exercise of their being. They can misuse their powers and terminate their earthly existence today. Others, through application and circumstance, can use their earthly experiences wisely and thus live longer. Has the Cosmic willed that one shall live longer than another? It is only in the Cosmic Order that some shall live wisely and others foolishly. It is part of the whole plan or existing state that some mortals shall be subject to ill effects and others not. God has not ordained who shall and who shall not be so subject. That falls within the province of man's own intelligence. We either conform harmoniously to the Cosmic Order or we do not. It is not decreed that some shall and some shall not.

We say in our monographs that the Cosmic wills the transition of every man. Perhaps we should not have used the word *wills*. It creates the misconception that the Cosmic Mind has inscribed the hour of passing for each mortal. What is really meant is that in the mind of the Cosmic there is an effect for every combination of causes. Whenever a man shall so live that certain causes shall come about, the effects of which mean his

transition, then he shall die. A shipload of humans sinks and hundreds of lives are lost. The Cosmic has not arbitrarily willed that at that hour catastrophe is to occur and that it shall be the appointed time of transition for each one on board. It is in the Cosmic Order, however, in the very nature of that which is the Cosmic, that men through their sociological and political affairs and their technological developments can invoke causes which, by the necessity of their nature, will bring about death. Humans themselves, collectively as a nation or as a group, instigate causes which bring about their end. It is in the essence of the Cosmic that every mortal shall pass through transition. It is likewise in the essence of the Cosmic that man himself evokes the causes of his transition, depending upon the experiences his soul-personality needs and which experiences in turn are what directs a full life or a short one.

There is no escape from the Cosmic Order, but man may adapt that order to his living. There is an orderly way and a disorderly way of living. If we live disorderly in the Cosmic sense, we are not opposing God's will, as religionists often say. We are only producing a combination of ill effects for ourselves, which should cause us eventually to desire to prefer the orderly way of living. The manufacturer of the piano keyboard, for analogy, has not willed that man shall play upon it harmoniously. He has provided man with a keyboard, mathematically acoustically, and mechanically proper, which if used in various ways will produce numerous manifestations, that is, combinations of sounds. Man can produce on that keyboard either a harmonious sound or a discord. If one plays a discord on the keyboard he is not opposing the manufacturer's will. He is only bringing about an unpleasantness for himself.—X

Rose-Croix University Requirements

We have questions from time to time regarding the requirements necessary for students to attend the University. Naturally, we refer all these inquirers to the booklet entitled *The Story of Learning*, in which may be found detailed explanations regarding the regular courses offered by the Rose-Croix University, together with the necessary steps to be taken

in order to attend a University session.

All instruction given at the Rose-Croix University is, however, class-room instruction. The University does not offer correspondence courses. It is suggested that every member read carefully *The Story of Learning* and thereby familiarize himself with the general activities of this particular phase of our work, for his own information and for the intelligent discussion of the subject with other members.

Some members ask the question whether or not the University work will be too difficult for them; in fact, members have written and said that they hesitate to make further inquiry regarding the University because they are afraid that its activities would be beyond them. This has been definitely proved untrue in the history of the University itself. Every year our attendance at the University has increased, and every year the Students of the University are made up of our members from every walk of life. There are members attending the University who hold college degrees and others who never had the opportunity to complete any formal schooling. The instruction offered at the University is of such nature that it is beneficial to both of these classes, as it gives each individual student the opportunity for learning and research to the extent of his particular abilities and interest. Therefore, regardless of your background or training, do not hesitate to make inquiry about the University courses.

Work at the University in a three-week period does mean intensive study during that time, but with the help of capable instructors each individual student is guided to receive the most benefit for himself from the courses which he takes as his course of study. The textbooks and such matters are no more difficult than the monographs; in other words, if you are able to read and understand your monographs and, as far as that is concerned, the articles in this magazine and others published by the Order, you will be able adequately to handle the study requirements of a term at the Rose-Croix University.

Preliminary steps are necessary in order to register. It is required that an application be submitted. Any active member of AMORC may submit this application. After the application is received and approved by

us, the member receives a series of six introductory lessons which prepare him or her for the particular course which has been selected at the University. Upon satisfactorily completing the study of these six preliminary lessons, or, as they are called, matriculation lectures, the student is eligible for registration. It is, therefore, advisable that members of the Order who hope or believe it possible to attend a University session submit their application for matriculation and complete these lectures well in advance. Write to the Registrar of the University for necessary instructions and application forms.

It is of interest, I believe, to all members of the Order that ever since the founding of the Rose-Croix University, now more than ten years ago, its student body has grown every year. Not only has the student body increased in number, but many students have attended for a number of years. This return of students to the University each year certainly is the best recommendation of the value that can be received from these three weeks of intensive directed study. There are, of course, in addition to the instruction in the classes and courses which are selected, many other interests. These include special addresses and lectures, by officers of the Order, and various social and recreational activities.

Very fortunately, the history of the Rose-Croix University has been uninterrupted even during the war-years. While we could not always be sure in advance of our complete faculty during the war-years, actually we have never had to restrict or cancel a session of the University. Even though the 1945 Convention of the Order was cancelled a short time before the University classes began, this session was the largest in the history of the Rose-Croix University. In 1946 we will have an annual Rosicrucian Convention as usual. The 1946 term of the University will begin on Monday, June 17, and continue for the usual three-weeks' period, ending immediately prior to the 1946 Convention. Make your plans now to attend one or both of these activities next year. You will find them to your advantage.—A

What are Unclean Spirits?

A frater in California asks our FORUM the question: "What must we understand by the term, 'unclean spirits?' In the Scriptures and

in the life of the Master, Christ, there are many references to the exercising of unclean spirits."

In Biblical times and, of course, in antiquity, generally, many of the things which are common knowledge now were not understood then. In the absence of fact, the ever-fertile imagination of man endeavored to provide an explanation. Animism is a belief that was prevalent at that time and is common among primitive peoples today. Concisely, it is the assumption that almost all things are imbued with life and intelligence whether they are actually so or not. Consequently, many inanimate objects were said to have a *spirit* or a vital self, which could and did disassociate itself from the object at times. All living things, early men thought, had a *dual* nature. Such things as trees, plants, flowers, and animals had spirits. Usually the spirit of an animate thing was assumed to be its intangible characteristics, such as its disposition and temperament. An animal that might be loathed because of its habits, or feared, was presumed to have a monstrous spirit, embodying all of its horrible characteristics and none of its acceptable ones. The spirit was, in substance, usually intangible—like air or vapor. More often, however, it was thought that the spirit was just to be realized by its effects upon mortals. Of course, all spirits were not malevolent; some were supposed to be beneficent, inclining persons to virtuous acts. Among some primitive people, the virtues were considered to be an impelling of mortals by spirits to perform certain acts, each spirit corresponding to a different virtue. Thus one might exercise the influence of fortitude, another that of temperance, another, justice, and the like. The benevolent spirits were often called *fairies* or *gnomes*. These spirits were conceived to gain dominance over a mortal's being, by entering one of the apertures of the human body, such as the nostrils, mouth or ears, or even infiltrating through the eyes.

In antiquity, and even up to and including the Middle Ages, insane or demented persons were thought to be *possessed of spirits*. This meant that malevolent spirits had entered the person's being and were dominating his soul and mind. The only recourse under such circumstances was to have the spirits *exorcised*, driven out, by incantations or some similar theurgical practice. A whole

liturgy for removing spirits was gradually evolved, and it became the epitome of witchcraft and sorcery. Some of the books of the medieval times provide descriptions of such rites and ceremonies; they are an interesting insight into the superstitions of man's mind. Since spirits were affirmed to be supernatural beings, only those familiar with supernatural powers could ever hope to cope with them. It was thought that having traffic with the *unseen* would naturally cause such persons to exhibit some exceptional qualities.

Therefore, those who were unfortunate enough to be distorted in physical form or malformed because of some malady, or who had a nervous twitching of the face causing grimaces, were thought to possess these powers. At times such persons were tortured and killed, having been charged with invoking of spirits which had caused certain incidents such as plagues, death, accidents, and the like. Our early American history is replete with the burnings at the stake of such persons in New England. These persons were, of course, innocent victims of the superstitions of the times. Some of such individuals, however, actually capitalized on the prevailing superstitions; they acted the part, dressing in a way to heighten the weirdness of their appearance. They would resort to rites and ceremonies such as people would expect of them. They often became local oracles to be consulted on what the future would reveal. Their prognostications were adroitly worded so that almost any meaning could be attached to them. Their services were constantly in demand by those who wished to have some enemy, or person who stood in their way, execrated. For a stipulated fee the sorcerer would promise to invoke the diabolical powers at his command and inflict suffering or death upon the enemy of his client.

It was a superstition that these sorcerers could conjure from Hades, or the underworld, a virtual host of evil spirits, each possessing his own distinct nefarious attributes. Some of these spirits bore diseases, others insanity, others loss of memory, or deformity, and the like. They would be let loose upon a community, family, or an individual. People were in constant dread of these entities which might suddenly take possession of them. Only certain amulets or

talismanni were believed to be protection against them. These amulets were thought to have had conferred upon them a supernatural efficacy by the sorcerer, who served as an intermediary between man and this unseen world of terror. This is one of the reasons why, during the Middle Ages, all householders kept their windows very tightly closed at night. The night air was *polluted* by the malevolent spirits and, in fact, was a carrier of them.

Obviously, the antics of a maniac were often so *inhuman* that he seemed to act like a creature of another world, or an entity from Hades. It was presumed that his actions were the behavior of demoniac spirits. Then, according to the ideas of the people, it would be necessary to exercise, that is, to break the spell of the spirits and to drive them out of the victim's body. Aside from the magical rites used during the Middle Ages to drive evil spirits from the insane, these unfortunate persons were often subjected to severe flagellation; the screams of the victims were often heard at great distances.

It must be remembered that the Bible is a collection of books or accounts gathered throughout the centuries. It reflects in its wording many of the ancient *misbeliefs* and prevalent customs. The Master Jesus and the other avatars were successful in treating the insane but had no such misconceptions about *spirits*; however, eyewitnesses of such demonstrations — and those who later recounted the experiences — presumed that Jesus was using some method of his own for conjuring spirits out of the insane.—X

The Mystery of the Divining Rod

A frater of the State of Maryland now arises to address our *Forum*. He says: "If the subject of the divining rod has not been discussed in the *Forum*, please do so. I know the subject was discussed in some detail in a Rosicrucian 'Pronunciamento,' of which I have that particular copy, but the article left several things unanswered, such as the exact nature and source of the energy which attracts the rod, the type of energy in the human body which flows toward the earth currents, and how and why the human energy goes through the rod instead of through the feet. For example, what causes the rod

itself to move, and how may this power be strengthened and developed to a point where reliable results are obtained?

"This whole series of questions stems from having observed a dowser demonstrating his ability, and the very last question comes from a selfish interest, as I have discovered that I possess a very slight ability in this regard and would like to strengthen it, if possible."

The phenomenon of the divining rod was known in antiquity and was used both for practical and superstitious purposes. The Romans used a *virgula furcata*, or forked twig of hazel or willow, to augur events. The turning of the twig or rod signified to them certain omens. The use of the divining rod was discussed in the work *De re Metallico* written in 1546 by G. Agricola. Sebastian Munster's *Cosmogony* in the sixteenth century again mentions the use of the divining rod. The descriptions indicate that it was used for locating metallic lodes or subterranean water.

German prospectors in the fifteenth century used a divining rod to locate minerals in the mountainous region of their country. The Germans brought it to England, history recounts, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. They employed it to assist Cornish miners in locating mineral deposits. The English are said to have ascribed the name *dowser* to whoever employed the divining rod with success. Today a dowser uses it principally for the locating of streams of water which are sub-surface.

The practice consists of holding a twig or rod of hazel or willow in the hands. The hands grip the rod at its extreme ends. When the dowser approaches a hidden source of water or metal, the rod turns vigorously in his hands, the turning of the rod indicates the presence of the water or metal. It would appear that the dowser is not exerting any physical *effort* or *will* to turn the rod.

What does academic science say with respect to this phenomenon? The average physicist will execrate it as either deceit, trickery, or superstition. Such a scientist, however, is actually making an offhand surmise as to the opinion of science, on the phenomenon. The fact remains that science has made numerous serious investigations of dowsers and their use of the divining rod in locating water and metals. An English pro-

essor, Sir W. F. Barrett, was convinced that twisting was not a perfidious display on the part of the dowser. After an extensive analysis of all elements which, at least, were observable in the practice, he said that the phenomenon was due to *motor-automatism*. This means a reflex action on the part of the practitioner in response to some stimulus upon his mind. Professor Barrett further concluded, and this is quite significant, that the dowser's power "lies beneath the level of conscious perception." It was an admission that there was a mental disturbance of the dowser by some unknown stimulus and the mental disturbance caused him to turn the rod in his hands without realization that he was the cause. It would appear that this particular investigation established nothing more than that no deception was involved and that

- (a) Some force or energy became a stimulus only to certain individuals;
- (b) The force in some way excited the subconscious mind of the dowser, by which a muscular power was generated.

This particular investigator further related that his findings revealed that the best dowsers have been illiterate. This may have been caused by the opprobrium associated with the practice. In other words, educated persons, being aware that in staid scientific circles the practice was looked upon as a superstition, did not attempt dowsing for fear of identifying themselves with a misconception. The illiterate person would not be so apt to know of such prejudices and would attempt the practice with sincerity of motive.

During the middle of the nineteenth century there was an ever increasing interest in psychical research, and dowsing was subjected to many investigations having a truly scientific approach. The revelations of such investigations, although not fully or satisfactorily explanatory, were very enlightening. In 1854, after a report submitted by Monsieur Riondels concerning the discovery of a spring by means of the divining rod, the Paris *Academy of Science* appointed a committee to investigate the phenomenon. The report of the committee, instead of being given to the Academy, was finally published as a book. It was averred in the book that the committee learned that the rod was

moved directly by the muscles of the dowser and not by any external agency. These learned gentlemen were of the conclusion that no supernatural force or natural energy was turning the rod in the dowser's hands; his own muscles were doing so. But because of some subjective suggestion or involuntary action upon the dowser's part, they inferred that he could not resist turning the rod under certain conditions. Somehow, or in some way, a powerful suggestion coming from the subjective mind of the dowser was affecting the contracting of his own arm and hand muscles.

There are other examples of this action of the subjective mind and the result of suggestion upon the movements of the body, but they are not identical to the use of the divining rod. For instance, there is the use of the pendulum for purposes of prognostication. A boy of ten or twelve years of age is made to stand on the floor within the center of a circle three or four feet in diameter, so as to be free from interference. About six inches from his body he holds a cord which is suspended vertically and on the end of which is a small weight. The cord and weight hang free so they may oscillate like a pendulum. The boy is asked his age. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, the pendulum oscillates the number of times corresponding to the years of the boy's age. The subject is quite certain that he held the pendulum still and sincerely avers that he did not cause it to move. Psychologically, the explanation is not difficult. His own knowledge of his age caused his subjective mind, when the question was asked, to respond and move the body slowly in accordance with the proper number of years. Objectively, the boy was not aware that he was doing this. A slight muscular movement caused the pendulum to sway. However, in such an instance the subject already *knows* that which becomes the stimulus of his bodily movement. In the case of the dowser, knowledge of the location of the water is not had, so in fact the phenomena are not parallel as some have believed.

Further investigation showed eight successes out of eight trials when the dowser used a wooden rod. When rods of other substances were substituted, the successes were not high, out of the number of trials. With a copper rod the results were four out of

seven trials; with the iron, two out of four, and with a glass rod no success was had. Another interesting discovery was the relationship between the weights of metal detected and the distance when the rod was affected. The greater the amount of gold, the further in distance the rod became affected and began to turn in the hands of the dowser. Small amounts of gold, conversely, required the dowser to be much closer before there was any evidence of movement of the rod.

Experimenters also took various metals, which a dowser could ordinarily detect, and wrapped them in heavy sheets of paper, without causing any apparent different effect upon the movement of the rod or the lessening of the detection of the metals. Whatever the emanation from the metals it would appear that the paper was no insulation against it. It was also determined that there was a corresponding relationship between the direction and strength of the movement of the rod and the depth and location of the water. The greater the depth of the water, the less vigorous was the movement of the rod. Varying the direction of the water caused an alteration in the direction of the movement of the rod, so the investigators related.

The conclusions of these later experimenters did not differ much from their predecessors. It was their consensus of opinion that the movement of the rod is the result of a muscular action of the dowser, a contraction of his arm and hand muscles, of which he is unconscious, causing the rod to turn, the muscular contraction being due to some *unknown* external excitation affecting him. The parallel between this unknown external excitation which affects the dowser and that which affects homing pigeons was noted. The experimenters at that time were ignorant of how homing pigeons are able to follow courses that lead them over great distances to return to their homes.

One experimenter cites an instance that would seem at first to oppose the opinion that the muscles of the dowser turn the rod because of a mysterious effect upon his nervous system. In this particular case the rod was placed in a sheath or hollow tube. The dowser's hands gripped the sheath and not the rod. However, the rod was observed to turn in the sheath where it could not have been affected by any muscular action of the dowser's hands. It was then assumed that

the rod might turn without the dowser. However, it was found that the rod must be in the hands of certain persons before it will respond. By certain persons is meant those individuals having *cryptesthetic* powers; namely, a certain hypersensitivity.

Attempts were made to determine the nature of the energy or stimulus affecting the rod or organism of the dowser. Mager conducted experiments with a galvanometer, on the assumption that minute electrical currents were the cause. The needle of the galvanometer was but slightly deflected in comparison to the much more vigorous and uniform rhabdic force (or movement of the rod). Many dowsers have been observed consciously to try to oppose the turning of the rod in their hands. Nevertheless, the rod would turn. Where the dowser has been successful in some cases of apparent violent movement of the rod, in holding the ends rigid, the center of the rod was noticed to twist and sometimes to break. Another curious but, I believe, significant fact is that silken or woolen gloves worn by an ordinarily successful dowser immediately will cause the movement of the rod to cease. This would indicate that a natural physical force subject to insulation was being displayed, and removes the phenomenon from the category of superstition or a purely psychological manifestation.

It would also appear that metals, and even water, radiate certain energies to which some humans are particularly sensitive. Of course, we are quite aware of the radioactivity of minerals, and we know that they do affect the human organism. It would also seem that certain subtle energies affect the nervous system of dowsers and in turn cause the subjective mind, by excitation, to produce or exert a powerful and involuntary muscular action. In the hands of these particular persons, the rod becomes an instrument—a form of detector. The rod, placed between two forces, or at least between the mysterious radiation from the minerals or the water and the sensitivity of the dowser, responds. The subconscious intelligence of the dowser then causes the muscular action—the actual turning of the rod.

Such persons apparently develop within themselves with the uses of the rod what we might term a human *radar* system. Certain radiations from metals or water impinge

upon this magnetic radiation generated by the dowser, possibly in his own human aura, and he reacts to it, indicating by the turning of the rod the location of the source from which are emanating the radiations. The homing pigeon, a once mysterious phenomenon, is now believed to carry within his own physiological make-up a natural radar system. In its flights, certain earth and other subtle magnetic currents impinge upon the sensitivity of the pigeon, causing him to react to them and making it possible for him to follow a course by reflex action. In his flights he thus follows these reactions like a radar-equipped plane flying through a fog, guided only by the graph and shadows appearing on the fluorescent end of the cathode tube of the radar device.

In the light of what science now knows about the radioactivity of metals and the exceptional supersensitivity of the *aura* of humans, the divining rod is not to be considered a superstition, but a phenomenon worthy of careful scrutiny. In the August 1943 issue of the *Rosicrucian Digest*, we published a photograph that was officially taken by the British Royal Air Force, showing officers of the Royal Air Force in a desert of North Africa, using a divining rod successfully to locate water.

The early Rosicrucian teachings have long discoursed upon earth rays and their effects upon living things. When we first introduced these ideas, naturally we were subject to much scoffing and criticism. Time, of course, is substantiating them. Experiments in dowsing (and also telekinesis) have been conducted in connection with psychical research here at the Rose-Croix University, and it has been established beyond doubt that there is nothing supernatural about it whatsoever. It is a *natural phenomenon*. We have certain theories about it which we are trying over a period of time to substantiate. Just what the frequency of these radiations is and what their exact nature is in the field of electromagnetics is not definitely known yet. We live in a sea of electromagnetic radiations, and we are learning more about them all the time. Many of them truly do "lie below the level of our conscious perception." We are not aware of their direct effect on us, only their secondary effect—the things which they cause us to do and which often seem eerie or weird. We must

remember at all times that the so-called supernatural is just that for which man has not yet found the natural explanation.—X

Should Capital Punishment be Abolished?

A frater of Chicago now joins our FORUM circle. He rises and asks, "Is the Rosicrucian Order in favor of capital punishment, the penal system, and the theory that lawbreakers should be forced to endure hardships, both mental and physical, in punishment?"

It was not so many years ago that we had occasion to explain in this FORUM that criminals were once considered to be sub-human beings. In fact, they were thought to be a kind of beast in human form. It was a prevalent superstition that the criminal was of a definite type, that he fell into a physiological mould. Therefore, attempts were made to classify his physical characteristics, namely, the kind of hands he had, the eyes, and the shape of his cranium. Fortunately, a statistical study of criminals made by an early student of criminology revealed that there were no standard physical traits for criminals. A man with a cultured and intelligent appearance, without hardness of expression or deformity, could likewise be most perverse in his conduct. However, the supposition that criminals were a different kind of human, with different bodies and souls, led to inhuman treatment of them.

It is only in comparatively recent times that criminologists, working with psychologists and psychiatrists, have proved that a high percentage of criminals are mentally ill or deficient. Two principal factors contribute to make the criminal: First, mental deficiency, and second, environment. Of the two the latter is the greater cause. The moral sense of the individual, if he is normal, causes him to extend his self-consciousness to include others and society in general. In the most limited sense, self-consciousness or interest is devoted to that which brings about satisfaction only to our own body or mind. It is very intimate. We like to acquire clothes and food, and we like to experience physical enjoyment, because all of these are a satisfaction of the instinct of self-preservation in its narrowest sense. Gradually, however, the self expands eventually to include things which are more remote than one's own person. It will come to include our

family circle, our group of friends, the community, and the nation. What is detrimental to all these things, which the expanded self includes, we consider as having a similar effect upon ourselves. In other words, a natural, normal person's self includes a number of integrated things. Experience, however, tells us that often it may not be a good thing to include certain items as part of ourselves. Thus, for example, we should not extend self so as to include those persons, no matter how much we may like them as individuals, who have become enemies of organized society. If we do so, we involve ourselves.

Proper training and the right environment has, therefore, an influence on the moral values, upon what we come to think is good or bad for self. One who is reared in surroundings of vice, where theft, arson, and assault are common acts by his associates, accepts such acts as the attributes of his friends and to his friends he extends his self-interest, makes them a part of his intimate feelings. Consequently, what is done to them by society because of their acts he considers a hurt to himself. Therefore, he is instinctively furthering and protecting crime. When such a person is apprehended, he is not conscious of a crime. In fact, the State is his enemy because it is attacking him. It is striking at self and self includes the criminal associates who are his friends. Punishment, in the sense of physical abuse or torture, does not change such misconception on the part of that kind of criminal. The more severe the punishment, the more it is considered by him as a persecution of self.

If the criminal in such an instance is young and normal, isolation from other criminals and education in the ends that society hopes to accomplish, may correct his misconception. In such instances, penal institutions should, in fact, be *correction* institutions; they should endeavor to accomplish their objective not by punishment but by education. Where there is no realization of wrong, through ignorance of the precepts underlying it, punishment only results in resentment and a belief that the punished one has become a victim of the power of society. It embitters the criminal.

The criminal, who is a victim of environment, as explained, should, of course, be restrained until his views are corrected, be-

cause he is obviously a menace to society. He should likewise be disciplined. He must be made to adhere to all the intelligent rules of the institution. He must be made to understand these rules, to know that they are not just mere arbitrary impositions, and why they are necessary. When he fails to comply, the discipline should take the form of deprivation of privileges.

There are also those unfortunate persons who have a deficiency of the moral sense and are unable to evaluate the difference between right and wrong. It is not a matter of having them properly extend their self-consciousness so as to include as a part of their own nature or being those things which are right. They are so unstable that they have no set convictions regarding behavior. They feel justified in one act today and another act tomorrow which may be quite opposite in nature. Many such persons, called moral delinquents, are *morons*. They are of a sub-level of intelligence due to inheritance. Often they are the children of syphilitic or insane parents. The sense of responsibility cannot be cultivated within them. Such unfortunate persons must, of course, be restrained, for they, too, are a menace to society. These persons should not be punished but treated psychologically or medically if possible. If they are beyond help, they should be employed usefully in the institution in which they are restrained and segregated from society. Their contribution to society should consist of their being subjects of study by psychiatrists and criminologists.

Most persons who commit murder are quite aware of its being a moral violation, as well as an offence against the State. At times they are victims of provocation, of intense emotional reaction, such as jealousy or hatred. This constitutes a temporary insanity wherein they lose all restraint of themselves. At other times, the murderers are those who are deficient in the moral sense, as we have explained, and have no realization of the consequence of their acts. The law takes these differences into consideration by declaring some of the offenders insane and others guilty of first or second degree murder. There is nothing accomplished by taking the life of such persons, through capital punishment. If the State does that, it has become nothing more than a murderer itself, no matter what legal stand it takes to justify

its exercise of power to take a life. It cannot be said that the State resorts to capital punishment for *self-defense*. The State can be just as secure by keeping such humans in custody. If the murder was committed as the result of a momentary weakness, the imprisoned man has a chance to realize his grave misconduct. He can redeem himself and pay society back through some useful acts beyond the prison walls. If the murderer is found to be delinquent in the moral sense, he is subnormal and certainly should not forfeit his life for something for which he is not responsible.

Those who favor capital punishment say that it discourages crimes of passion such as murder. In most of the states of the United States capital punishment is the penalty for first degree murder and there is no indication that, because of it, there has been any slackening of murders. The average murderer is quite aware of the consequence of his deeds and yet capital punishment is no deterrent. Furthermore, some supervisors of penal institutions claim that most men prefer execution to life imprisonment. Consequently, if punishment is the object, imprisonment would be more severe than capital punishment. An *enlightened* society will eventually not want to take human life under any circumstances. It will find it quite illogical to justify its purpose in taking a life, while at the same time claiming that the murderer's purpose in taking a life was wrong. The underlying precept is this: Has any individual, or group of individuals, the Cosmic right to take human life by force for any reason? Life is a gift conferred upon man. It is not something which he has created. It is man's Cosmic obligation to enhance that gift, not to destroy it. Remove the causes of crime. Isolate the criminal—do not kill him. You cannot stamp out the causes of crime by killing the individual criminal.—X

Activities at Rosicrucian Park

I believe it in order occasionally at this Forum to discuss some of our activities at Rosicrucian Park. I think it will help you better to understand some of our problems, what we are trying to accomplish, and help you to know, shall I say, the human side of AMORC.

Perhaps I should mention some additions to the staff. One has been with us now for several months and is proving to be most efficient in his work and well liked by the members. I refer to Frater Rodman R. Clayson. Frater Clayson was associated for several years with the Oakland Minor Lodge in the Bay region of Northern California. He was master of the lodge one year and, of course, assumed many duties in connection with the ritualistic teams, class instruction, and so forth. With the growth of our Department of Instruction, it was necessary to add him to our staff; he came well qualified—familiar with the problems of members and quite conversant with all the aspects of the teachings.

Soror Clayson, his wife, is also now a member of our staff of workers, assisting in our Reading Mail Department. Like the others in that department, it is her duty to analyze the various letters and determine to whom they should be directed for the most prompt attention. Unfortunately, all members do not address their letters to the person who should answer them, and through our Reading Mail Department we determine from the contents to whom they should be sent.

Not quite a year ago we also added to our National Lecture Board, Frater Joel Disher, former master and officer of the Johannes Kelpius Minor Lodge in Boston, Massachusetts. He has been associated with that lodge for a number of years and is thoroughly familiar with temple rituals and instruction in the Rosicrucian teachings. For the past few months he has been on the road lecturing for AMORC, having lectured in Seattle and Portland, and at this time is concluding a very successful campaign in Toronto, Canada. After the first of the year he will be a member of the staff here at Rosicrucian Park, also in our Department of Instruction, answering letters pertaining to questions on the teachings and principles of the Order.

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The sound of the hammer is very much in evidence at Rosicrucian Park. Our construction program, greatly needed and long delayed, is off to a slow start. In other words, we would like to be doing considerably more building than we are, but the national shortage of materials and labor is particularly felt

in this region. At the present time we have added a large reinforced concrete and steel vault adjoining our Recording Department, in which all of the confidential files and records pertaining to each member will be placed. This large vault with its heavy fire-proof door is constructed according to engineering specifications and is able to resist a high degree of temperature for six hours without injuring the contents. This is something that has been very much needed to secure the membership records.

We have here at Rosicrucian Park, of course, still another but a smaller vault which is part of the official archives of the Order and in which are deposited the manuscripts, charters, and documents of historic interest and vital importance to the Order. The new vault, however, will not be used for doctrinal material but strictly for administrative records.

Operations are also under way for additional office space for our Recording Department. The many little services which a member receives — the additional enclosures, charts, diagrams, questionnaires, and reports — require personal attention and analysis. That means a more extensive staff. Only those members who have been in the Order for a great number of years are in a position to realize how many more benefits—material things, if you wish—insofar as the studies are concerned, a member receives today than he did twenty years ago. And yet, today the dues are the same as they were in 1926.

For some years we have had a Spanish-American Department through which the teachings of the Organization are made available in Spanish for those sections of the Americas where Spanish is the leading language. Some people do not realize that Spanish is the prevalent language of the Western world, English being confined primarily to North America. Even in North America, however, we find that Spanish is the language of one of the countries, namely, Mexico. We now have available Rosicrucian instruction in the Spanish language. The Spanish-American Department functions just as does the organization in English. Under the direction of Frater Manuel Sunyer, this department provides instruction and correspondence in much the same way as you are familiar with it in the English language.

We are also making an addition to our stock room to take care of our increased supplies of Spanish-American books and literature, as well as our English works. Because we were unable to physically expand during the war years, our facilities were crowded and our efficiency impaired. We hope the new stock room will overcome this difficulty and assure even more prompt service to our members and friends.

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During the winter months at Rosicrucian Park we conduct weekly classes in our Science Building, usually a series of lectures which supplement the complete summer term of the Rose-Croix University. This season the lectures concern the lives and teachings of the principal mystics from antiquity to the present—the lives and teachings of such persons as Meister Eckhart, Amenhotep IV, Dionysius, Plotinus, Spinoza, and numerous others. The lecturers are all staff members and are of the Rose-Croix University faculty.

Frater Erwin Watermeyer, physicist and head of our Technical Department, has used these Friday night sessions for experimental purposes to try out the new principles which he is working on in his laboratory in the Rose-Croix Science Building, with respect to light, color, and sound, and their proper relationship to and effects on the human emotions. The experiments are not all psychological but are physical as well. He works to produce various colored shadows, using the different instruments of the laboratory for this purpose. His findings and the reactions of the class to his experiments determine whether such material shall be made available to lodges and chapters of the Order throughout the jurisdiction, for demonstrations at rallies, and whether it shall be used at the Annual Convention of AMORC. The classes are well attended.

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In looking ahead, we can find no more important source of future development of the Organization than that of our Junior Order. To appeal to young people today, as well as children, is to assure the future development and growth of the Order as a whole. The Junior Order is now functioning in a manner that serves various age groups. It extends a series of instructions that is not a duplication of other organizations or of

school work, but provides the opportunity for members of the Order to direct the thoughts of their children toward some of the principles incorporated in the teachings of the Order. The Junior Order is established on a Lodge system so that children and young people may have the opportunity of being affiliated with an established organization and of participating in their own Lodge and ritualistic work. These teachings are offered in a manner similar to the teachings of AMORC; that is, they may be secured individually where there are not groups of children to be organized; or, groups may be established. It is not necessary that Junior Order membership be composed exclusively of children of AMORC members. Others may be invited to participate. Further information concerning the Junior Order activities may be obtained by directing a request for such information to Frater J. Duane Freeman, Director of the Junior Order of Torch Bearers, here at Rosicrucian Park.

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Final plans for the new Supreme Temple will be completed within the next few weeks. The delay has been due to the war, since some of the equipment needed, such as an air-conditioning plant, was not being manufactured. The new equipment is to have entirely different specifications and the conclusion of the war had to be awaited until engineers could submit postwar specifications for the equipment to be manufactured. It is hoped that the new Supreme Temple will be under construction by late summer of 1946, possibly in August. Again, construction of the temple will depend entirely on labor and the supply of materials. Since the new Temple will be a much more elaborate and complex edifice than the additions to our stock room and offices, naturally its construction cannot be undertaken until more settled conditions prevail. Every member of the Order, however, will be extremely proud of the Supreme Temple. Not only those who journey to Rosicrucian Park to attend our conventions, or visitors throughout the year, but members from remote places, who may not be able to come, will find a great deal of pleasure and happiness in knowing of the Temple and its facilities, because it is the physical symbol of the spiritual ideals and purposes of the Order. We hope that every member, once at least during his lifetime, no

matter where he or she may live, will be so Cosmically blessed as to find the means to come here some day to spend a brief time in the Supreme Temple.

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Plans are under way for the Rosicrucian Convention. There is every indication that the convention which will be held next summer during the week of July 7 - 13 will probably be the largest in the history of AMORC in its second cycle of activity. There is a *reason* for this. First, it was necessary for us to omit last year's convention to comply with government regulations. Second, the gas rationing having been ended, many persons who ordinarily come by car will be able to attend and bring friends who are also members. It is to be a time of rejoicing, a sort of pilgrimage to a place which means much to members; where they come to express to the Cosmic their thanks for the outcome of the war—the place where they may collectively plan not just for themselves, but where they may help to work out a program for all of humanity.

In consideration of a large attendance, we are making every effort to include many features—new things, additional things—for the benefit of our visitors. You who have been to Rosicrucian Conventions before know that each day affords many opportunities. There are lectures on every aspect of the teachings, class instruction, demonstrations of a mystical nature, demonstrations in our various laboratories of the physical laws of the universe, lectures and demonstrations in the Planetarium, and excursions through the Museum which amount to a journey backward in time to study the early civilizations and examine the beautiful antiquities and works of art of the ancient peoples. The convention affords opportunities for personal *initiation* in the beautiful Supreme Temple and for interviews with all of the officers of the Grand and Supreme Grand Lodges whom you might have known only by name. You have a chance to listen to addresses by other officers and members from all over the world who attend our conventions. It is a pleasant experience as well to mingle with hundreds of people from every walk of life, from every part of North and South America, whose ideals and interests so far as the teachings are concerned are identical with your own. The beautiful grounds, the

architecture of the buildings reminiscent of ancient Egypt, all contribute to make the week a most happy and memorable event.

There is also the social side—picnics on the grounds, dances at night, games, opportunities for conversing in groups, a chance to read those books you have always wanted to read at the Rose-Croix Research Library, an opportunity for meditation in the Shrine or in the Temple itself. You owe it to yourself to attend this year's convention. Don't wait until the last minute to make your preparations. Inquire now about the best way to come if you are coming by train, by boat, by bus, or by plane. Get all the particulars, set the date on which you will leave; *plan for it*. It may mean a little sacrifice in time and money, but all the better things of life are had that way. Almost all who attend a convention say that the best part is upon their return home, because that is when they have a chance to assimilate all the experiences which they have so busily registered during convention week, and so in effect that week in its benefits and pleasurable experience spreads out over the whole year. I think there is no better testimony to the fact that the Convention is enjoyed by members than that 80 per cent of those attending each convention are those who have been to one or more previous conventions.

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Shall We Disturb Old Things?

A soror from Pennsylvania, a member of our FORUM family for some time, asks: "Can a person receive any ill effects from looking over and disturbing old things in an attic? I have been led to believe that such is the case, but do not quite accept it."

As a matter of fact, the feeling of depression accompanying the handling of old objects in an attic is endemic to most people. The emotions are not induced by a supernatural cause but principally by a psychological one. We shall consider the commonest cause first. Why are things placed in an attic, a basement or storeroom instead of discarded or sold? Many persons are so constituted psychologically that they are *hoarders*. They have a strong sense of cupidity, that is, a love of possessions. They like to surround themselves with trinkets and bric-a-brac, sometimes valuable but many times

worthless except for a sentimental attachment. It is a method of creating an atmosphere that pleases them. The numerous things they collect constitute their world. Each article reminds them of an incident. They are continually surrounded by friends in the form of the things which they possess. These possessions eventually clutter their homes or offices. The older objects, that is, those which have been in their possession longer, are moved to a storeroom or attic in order to make room for incoming new ones.

The above are extreme cases. We all, however, possess some of this inclination, especially for sentimental reasons. A picture long hanging in our home we finally realize is out of date, or a chair is obviously of obsolete design or badly worn and no longer appropriate in the living-room. Perhaps they should be disposed of. Yet there is an affection for them. We might not want to admit this sentiment to others, for they might think it a weakness. We, therefore, try to justify our retention of the articles by saying that possibly they "may be of use sometime." Into the basement or attic they go, to accumulate dust and even become a fire hazard. Sometimes the articles are forgotten as the years go by.

When an occasion arises for you to go into the attic in search of something, you are amazed at the collection of objects whose existence you had forgotten. Curiosity impels to lift one down, turn another one over, or, in fact, to examine each article in turn. As you do so, you find yourself running through the gamut of emotions. Here, for example, is grandma's old rocker. You can probably visualize the dear old lady, as she sat knitting and rocking in it before the living-room window, her hands gnarled with age, peering through dim eyes at the work in her hands. You recall coming and sitting beside her chair and looking up into her face, a face free from guile and marked with human understanding. You can visualize her almost saintly smile, as she peers down at you, looking over the top of her *specs*. Her hand strokes your head and, as you recall that touch, you almost feel that you have received some benediction from on high. Neither of you would speak. There was the silence of understanding, which had a curative property, for after a few moments you would rise to your feet and your heart would no longer

be troubled. The experience was like an ablution, a purification. As these thoughts pass rapidly through your consciousness, you experience the corresponding emotions. The original experience was, most likely, a happy one—the realization that it is gone, that it is of the past and can never recur, is now sad and sobering.

When we dwell for even a few moments among those things which we have put away in the attic, we are made extremely conscious of a loved past which can never return. The worst effect that such an experience can have upon us is a temporary state of melancholy. Usually the experience is forgotten when we enter into the sunshine or the world of the now, the immediate, with its pressing demands upon us. It is not advisable, however, that a person, who is mentally ill or emotionally unstable, be permitted these lugubrious experiences. It would serve only to aggravate the condition and cause distress. To a normal person the ill effects are but momentary—sometimes even advisable. When we are likely to forget those people who have contributed to our happiness and joy and made sacrifices for us, when we feel so very independent and free of all others, it is time for us to go up into the attic and look at the objects of the past and recall our obligations and remember those who loved and did for us. It makes good morale.

We are sometimes depressed by the handling of objects with which we are not familiar. Such experiences are related to that phenomenon known in psychical research as psychometry. The Rosicrucians call it *vibroturgy*. As we have explained previously in this FORUM, objects are affected when exposed to intense emotional stimulus. Of course, the physical composition of the object, so far as its form, shape, substance or color are concerned, shows no alteration. It would seem, however, that the radiations of the human aura, emitted under intense emotional stress, do create an auric condition in the molecular structure of the object, just as an article can be impregnated with an odor to which it has been exposed. A person having a supersensitivity, which we call cryptesthesia, becomes conscious of the vibrations radiated by the object. These vibrations are received by the individual's sympathetic nervous system through his own aura, and thence become translated into gross-

er vibrations which produce emotional reactions corresponding, to a minor extent to those had by the original or last owner of the object. This is not a matter of superstition, but a psychic phenomenon that requires intelligent analysis. It should not be subjected to the ridicule of the scoffer. The scoffer has probably never had such an experience, so he cannot conceive of its possibility. For analogy, some persons are incapable of hearing auditory vibrations beyond a certain octave. Yet it would be ridiculous for them to deny that others, with a keener sense of hearing, are able to perceive them. The range of audibility for each human is not the same, as is well known. Likewise, some persons are susceptible to the phenomenon of vibroturgy, and others are not.

It is not uncommon for an intelligent and unsuperstitious person to have a feeling of repugnance for an object which he touches for the first time. The object, in its physical quality, may have nothing which would suggest to his objective mind any revulsion. Neither is there any experience retained in his subjective mind which comes to the fore when he picks up the article. Such individuals often will feel depressed after handling certain antiques or articles in an attic, even if these objects have never been seen before. The experience will not cause them any ill effect and the sensations will leave them when they have put the article down or have left the environment.—X

Nous—The Primary Substance

A frater in the United States Air Corps has asked to address our FORUM: "The subject of Nous rather confuses me. The monographs state that Nous manifests as *Spirit*, or Vital Life Force. They further state that the V.L.F. (Vital Life Force) is *positive* but that as it approaches the earth it becomes modified; however, it still continues as predominantly positive with some negative manifestations. The Chart states that Soul is to be listed under the V.L.F., and beside it we have *Consciousness* as an attribute. Now, is Soul the positive, and Consciousness the negative manifestation of the Vital Life Force? Is Consciousness the Inner Life? I presume that the negative and positive phases of Spirit are negative and positive electrons. However, I

see that you have electrons, atoms, and molecules listed under 'Spirit.'

The subject of nous is included in that part of the Rosicrucian metaphysics which is known as Ontology — the subject of being. The subject of Nous truly represents metaphysics because it is concerned with *first causes*. Generally, Rosicrucian metaphysics conceives, first, a teleological cause, namely a *mind* cause, as underlying everything. That mind which has an integrated order or intelligence existing everywhere, we term *The Cosmic*. The Cosmic Intelligence functions through a substance. It is a primary substance, a first material, from which come all things that have reality or manifestation. That substance is known as *nous*. Nous is a vibratory, undulating energy; it is infinite, that is, having no limits. It is indefinite; of itself it has no form, yet it creates all forms as we know them. It is also a *binary* energy. By binary, we mean that it has two phases, or polarities, which we know as negative and positive vibrations. At its source, in its absolute state, Nous has these two polarities equal within it; that is, both positive and negative vibrations are combined in the absolute state of Nous and are equal to each other. It is these differences of its nature, these two phases, which give Nous its generative possibilities.

The positive phase, or polarity, of Nous radiates through the Sun to our world, and throughout our immediate universe. This positive phase, likewise, is binary, or dual in nature. It consists of both positive and negative vibrations; however, it remains predominantly positive. This positive polarity of Nous manifests as *vital life force*. It is this which animates matter, brings into existence the living energy. An attribute of the Vital Life Force is *Consciousness*.

The negative phase of the polarity of Nous is what we Rosicrucians call *spirit*. It is the underlying energy of, and gives matter its composition and its manifestation. It accounts for electrons, atoms, and molecules. In all of these particles of matter, Spirit is dominantly negative, though it also has its positive phase. In other words, we may look at it this way: that each of the two phases of Nous, negative and positive, are *themselves* binary, namely, negative and positive, but each is either predominantly negative or predominantly positive. The Spirit energy of

Nous, the negative aspect of it, causes all those general classifications of matter which we call *solids*, *liquids*, and *gases*, and which Rosicrucians know as the *divinities*. It likewise accounts for those expressions of matter which the Rosicrucians call the *Principles*, namely, fire, air, water, and earth.

In man, then, Nous is expressed as a *double* binary force. His material substance, his body, consists of spirit energy, and is, therefore, principally negative. In the functioning of the material substance of his body the vibrations of the electrons and atoms are negative and positive. The V.L.F. and Soul of man are principally positive. Yet, *they too* have their negative and positive phases. We know that in matter we have those minute particles of matter called *electrons* which are both negative and positive in their vibratory energy. We know, too, that the cell, the particle of living matter, has a positive nucleus surrounded by a negative substance. We may rightly say that the body of man is negative, limited, and *finite*. Conversely, the Soul of man is positive, *infinite* and formless. The earth itself is a negative particle, floating in a sea of the predominantly positive energy of Nous. The absolute state of Nous which permeates the universe, although binary,—both positive and negative, as stated—is predominantly positive to that aspect of its nature which produces material things.

In man we find a harmonious *recurrence* of the two phases of Nous—the positive aspect represented in the Vital Life Force and the negative energy manifesting as the body. Consequently, the ancients were correct in stating that the human is a *microcosm*, a small universe. Man, truly is symbolic of Nous on a small scale.

The frater seems puzzled particularly as to the distinction between V.L.F. and Soul. It is V.L.F. entering matter that makes man not only a living entity, but a conscious being—a *Soul*. The V.L.F. carries with it, or, shall we say, is imbued with the higher intelligence of Nous. It is infinite and unlimited in nature, and it becomes Soul when in man. We cannot say that V.L.F. in and by itself as a positive polarity of Nous in the universe at large, is the same kind of Soul which we experience in man. We do say, however, that V.L.F., when it is taken into the lungs with the first breath of life, *acting* upon the human organism, produces the *in-*

ner consciousness and governing intelligence that becomes the human Soul. Thus, in its essence, the human Soul is the same in all mortals, but in its manifestation and its acting upon the individual being, it is quite unlike. I like to think of the human Soul in this regard, in the same sense as did some of the ancients—that is, as being a *harmony* of the body and the Vital Life Force. To use an analogy, let us think of a musical instrument such as the lyre. We will call the lyre the V.L.F. Then we will think of the musician's hands and we will say that they correspond to the mortal body. When the lyre and the hands are brought together, when the musician's fingers pluck the strings of the lyre, harmonious sounds are produced. They have an existence equal to that of the lyre and the hands. Certainly no one would say that the sounds coming from a musical instrument, such as the lyre, are not as real as either the instrument or the musician. Yet, the musical sounds are dependent upon the combination of the two. The sounds, the harmony, we will say, are the Soul. This then, is still another example of the *Law of the Triangle*, the coming together of two elements to make a third, a third which becomes as real as the other two, and yet cannot have any existence without the other two.

Is consciousness of Soul? Our answer is Yes. The V.L.F. produces within man two phases of consciousness. There is, first, the simple consciousness of the nervous system, which makes perception possible. It is the consciousness of living matter. Then there is also the consciousness of Self, the realization of the ego, the realization of Soul. This is the higher aspect of this unified consciousness which the Vital Life Force brings forth within us. The Soul is the experiencing of our inner being, the positive side of our nature which the Vital Life Force confers upon us.—X

Between Good and Evil

The problem of good and evil is referred to as one that perennially confronts philosophical thought. It is no doubt a continuous, unsolved question—a question which, regardless of how much it has been discussed from a philosophical, religious, ethical, and moral point of view, it is doubted will ever be completely solved.

Recently a number of questions in correspondence from members have been brought to my attention concerning this problem, probably due to articles that have appeared in this *Forum* and the *Rosicrucian Digest*, from time to time, on the subject. There are many problems of thought in philosophy and science which are solely so because of the limitations of the human intellect to see the whole of the matter. In other words, if all the facts and conditions that bore upon a so-called problem could be comprehended by the human mind, probably no difficulty would exist. Since the human mind is finite and the final explanation of many of these problems is in the infinite mind, man cannot be conceived as being able to arrive at a satisfactory solution, except insofar as a progressive understanding of them is concerned. By progressive understanding we mean that as man develops morally, spiritually, intellectually, and particularly psychically, he broadens his horizon; he grasps a better understanding of his position in the universe, his relationship to it, and an inkling of the true meaning behind it all—the final meaning in the mind of the Creator.

Basically, the problem of good and evil resolves itself down to one or two fundamental questions. These questions have been discussed many times before in these pages and elsewhere, and therefore, we need not go into details here, except to review briefly what some of them are. First of all, by evil we mean anything that interferes with our plans, denies our hopes, destroys our works and efforts, or causes us pain, either of body or mind. In the problem regarding good and evil is a question as old as man's thought; it is: if there is an infinite God, is it that God can not or will not keep evil out of the world? If He can not—in other words, if evil exists in spite of God—then God is not infinite, all-powerful, and worthy of our adoration. If He is infinite or all-powerful and still will not keep evil out of the world, then how can we consider Him to be all-loving and truly a Father?

I will not attempt to analyze in this article the arguments that for hundreds of years have been brought forth by philosophers and religious leaders in response to these questions. The fact of the matter is that the answers we individually give to ourselves re-

flect pretty well our own philosophy of life. It is obvious that there is no one "cut and dried" answer, and that leads us back to a point already mentioned—that it is man's limited thinking that prevents him from seeing all the causes and effects involved; this makes it impossible for him to answer the question.

We must realize that, in accordance with our Rosicrucian philosophy, good and evil are positive and negative states and are comparatively relative; that is, they exist very much dependent upon our own viewpoint, moods, and conditions. There is a very fine line between good and evil. For example, many things are both good and evil, depending upon whether our point of view be one of our own immediate conclusion or one having a historical basis. Many who read this article can remember certain things that are commonly accepted today, as at one time having been considered evil. There was a time when common-sense, sanitary and hygienic practices of everyday life were looked upon as being evil. In other words, it was good to be dirty. Many so-called "moral practices" which are accepted today, without question, were evil in a prior generation, even within our own lifetime. Furthermore, that which is good can become evil under certain circumstances. The fire that warms us and cooks our food is good as long as it does no more than that, but let that fire destroy our home and the same fire that was a *good* will immediately become an evil, all because the same force has thwarted our well-being.

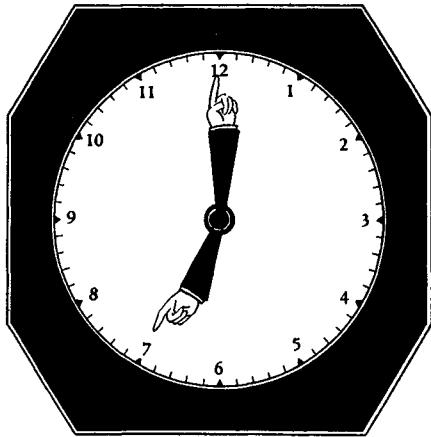
Other things besides fire can have this effect. Alcohol is a good example. It can be used for certain medical purposes, but it also can wreck a man's life. Evil can also become good. Money obtained in ways which might be considered evil could be expended to bring good to those who need it; and, as already pointed out, certain practices thought to be evil by people as a whole might turn out to be good. Mold upon certain forms of food makes the food unusable, but the same mold is able to develop penicillin, a useful drug. We can therefore see there is no dividing line that can be arbitrarily drawn between good and evil, and this brings to our attention even more forcibly the fact that the point between the two forces is

one of transition, and, since that already is elusive it proves the unreality of the two things themselves.

If good and evil were two fixed qualities or values that could easily be segregated from each other at all times and, therefore, by definition and use, never be confused, separated, or imposed each upon the other's meaning, then we could conclude that these two forces were established, fixed conditions, just as the law of gravity or any other natural laws; but by the fact and illustrations that we have observed here, these conditions are so dependent upon the viewpoint of the human mind that they cannot always be clearly defined. There are indications that they are, insofar as values or laws are concerned, as fickle and indefinite as are the limitations of the human mind that interprets them.

One ancient philosopher said that everything is in a state of flux or transition, and so it is in regard to all values. To God there is no value in the sense that humans conceive it. God is perfect and includes everything. Our emotions and passions are brought forth primarily by things that are outside of us, but God, including all things, could have no emotions or passions because there is nothing external to Him. Since He is everything, He can desire nothing; He can have no purposes or plans in the human conception, or desires to carry them out, because He is everything. Men reason in order to learn and to discover what they do not already know, but God, who knows all, has no need for such reason. He is knowledge and wisdom, and there is nothing that He has to attempt to find out. Therefore, we see God as all-inclusive, and while the things that we desire we call *good* and the things to which we have an aversion we call evil, for God, who can have no desires or aversions, there can be no moral value on His part.

Good and evil are therefore inadequate human values and can not be assigned to the characteristics of God. This concept of God again makes us realize that before we can solve the problem of good and evil, or of any other scientific, philosophic, or religious question, we must be able to lift gradually and progressively our own thought toward the level of God.—A



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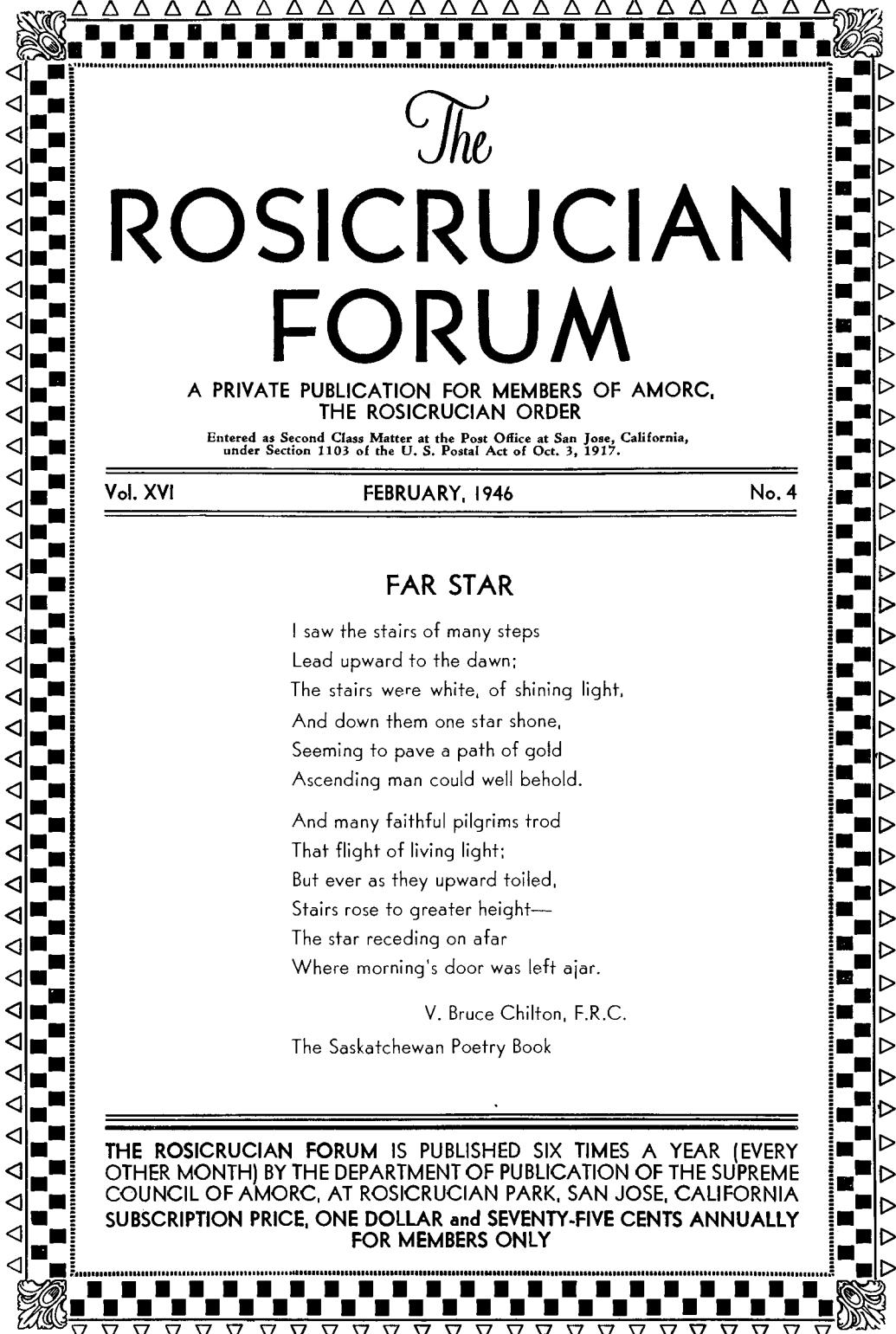
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FAR STAR

I saw the stairs of many steps
Lead upward to the dawn;
The stairs were white, of shining light,
And down them one star shone,
Seeming to pave a path of gold
Ascending man could well behold.

And many faithful pilgrims trod
That flight of living light;
But ever as they upward toiled,
Stairs rose to greater height—
The star receding on afar
Where morning's door was left ajar.

V. Bruce Chilton, F.R.C.

The Saskatchewan Poetry Book

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Greetings!



Dear Fratres and Sorores:

"Great oaks from little acorns grow." The culture and magnanimity, or the depravity and viciousness of nations are the outgrowth of the individual habits and the characters of their citizens. Collectively, a people will often give lip service to certain ideals, but, as individuals, they will act to the contrary. Therefore, the probability of a nation becoming a great benefactor to humanity in other than material creations must be determined from the conduct of its average citizen.

Watch the throngs on the main thoroughfares of great cities. They rush on their way, jostling each other rudely. Frequently, they fail to even mumble the stereotyped "Excuse me," or "Pardon me." Sometimes they turn about and glare reproachfully at the person into whom they had collided, whether he was responsible or not. In queues formed before shops or places of amusement, individuals will force their way inconsiderately, ahead of others, so as to be served first. Again, innumerable automobile drivers, when not watched by police, will not check their speed when pedestrians with the right-of-way cross their path. These are but a few indications of the lack of restraint of the instinctive urges in people.

Man is very much an animal. He has all the fundamental appetites and desires of the lower animals. He cannot completely quell them without becoming subnormal or abnormal. The only distinctive faculty of man is his *reason*. The reason can, and should, establish certain ideals, certain intellectual and emotional ends, which become competitive with the primitive urges. An animal, such as the dog, can not have intellectual desires. He can not strive to know about the heavens above him. He can not love to inquire into the nature of his own conduct. Aside from the appetites and the intellectual desires, man also has what we may call the *psychic urges*. They constitute, for example, compassion, sympathy, the desire for tranquillity, the love of justice and the love of

righteousness. These stimuli, or urges, are quite subtle. It is often difficult for these finer impulses of man's nature to make themselves felt in his consciousness. It is only when he is relaxed, when the grosser passions and appetites are subdued, that he may experience them. At such a time these immanent feelings are transformed by the mind into ideas, into things which seem to represent them. Consequently, we interpret certain acts, or kinds of conduct, as being in accord with justice, sympathy, and righteousness. The extent of our defining of these feelings is dependent upon our intelligence, experience, and education.

Man is by nature, gregarious; he desires to live in groups of his own kind, to form what he calls *society*. Many of the lower animals, likewise, prefer to live in groups, packs or herds. The psychic urges of man have caused his mind, his intellect, to confer upon society a distinctive meaning. Each of us who enjoy human society can, to the extent of our ability to express ourselves, give some reason why we like and wish to live with other humans. These reasons must conform to the psychic urges of our own being, to compassion, justice, and righteousness. If they do not, then we are not living like human beings. We are being driven blindly by the elemental aspects of our nature, to live as if in a herd. It is quite simple: either society becomes a pack of animals who instinctively function together merely to accomplish something to satisfy their physical requirements as individuals, or it has knowingly united to accomplish something for its *collective* good.

The individual who is inconsiderate, abusive and selfish in the narrowest sense of the word, in his relations with others, is *anti-social*. He may live in a community with other persons; he may indulge in the advantages which collective living provides, but he is nevertheless, *anti-social*. He is not contributing to the social ideal prompted by the psychic urges. He is merely conforming to the herd-instinct. Wolves care nothing

for the pack as a whole. They will collectively seize their prey when hunting in packs, but they will proceed to destroy their own pack by ferocious fighting among themselves.

The highest aim of human society is to *give*, to *create*, to *do*; the lowest aim of society is the effect of the herd instinct—using society only for the immediate benefit of the individual. The psychic urges cause man to realize that the highest social aim can not be satisfied through individual efforts. The creation of the beautiful, the development of a harmonious atmosphere which is appealing to the higher self, can never be a single enterprise. No artist wants to paint entirely for himself. His greatest joy is in the radiation of his aesthetic talents. He wishes others to see and enjoy the symmetry of line, or harmony of sound and color which he has executed. An artist's greatest personal happiness is in the realization that others also find enjoyment in his works.

The truly socially minded person is, therefore, one who displays a *courteous* attitude. By his conduct he is binding society together with the bonds of personal self-restraint so that it may be kept intact for higher purposes.

Ordinarily, when we explain courtesy, we do so in terms of ethics. This consists of a reciting of the generally accepted rules of conduct. However, a comparison of the customary ethics of various nations will show quite a disparity between them. The courtesy necessary to advance society, to make it serve the exalted aspect of man's nature, must go deeper than just the rules of conduct! It must go back to the *causes* of conduct. It must consist of those causes that can be made applicable to all human relations and changing conditions. The reason why one people will do something offensive to another, without compunction, is that their ethics are not founded upon the same premises of courtesy.

How shall this essential courtesy be determined? In all human enterprise, the individual must be the starting point of consideration. The self is a composite. It is the aggregate of the body with its physical urges, and the mind and soul, or psychic nature, with their respective attributes. We proceed by asking ourselves, What does our personal *self* want from life?

Our most insistent needs are the organic ones. We dislike the sensations of pain as the result of hunger, thirst, cold, and disease. Physical imperturbability or freedom from physical want or distraction, is thus a first essential. We say they are "first" because these distractions are so easily incurred. The normal human being is not satisfied, however, when only his physical needs are gratified, or when his body is at ease. We have the faculty of becoming self-conscious. We can observe, reflect upon the operation of our own minds. We can think, reason, recollect, imagine. Even when the body is passive, the mind may be very active. The mind is capable of mental desires—ends which it wants to achieve. These mental desires become stimuli, cravings which are often far stronger than the prosaic appetites. What person with creative ability, has not been tormented by the desire to experiment with, or to build some device, or has not wanted to satisfy his curiosity about the nature of something?

Life, then, obviously, if it is to provide tranquillity, must gratify these mental desires as well. Fortunately for humanity, there have been many humanitarians in the world. They have brought pleasure to their higher selves by alleviating the suffering of others and by correcting obvious social ills. This inclination to altruism and humanitarianism, is also a psychic or mental urge. If we have these innate inclinations, then the opportunity to gratify them is also what we want from life.

Since these elements, the desires of our composite self, are so basic, it is comparatively simple to set up certain rules to recognize them. Rules including them become the positive requirements of a system of ethics established for any people, regardless of race or nationality. You believe them as being indubitably necessary to any society of which you become a member, or a citizen. Fundamentally, courtesy is not complete until you have conceded to other members of society the same right to these positive requirements as you have. However, this is more than a mere expression of "others may do as I do." The unthoughtful pursuit of your positive requirements and others doing likewise may bring conflict. It would result in each individual acting entirely for himself and destroying society, as often has happened. Con-

sequently, each of us must set up a negative course of action in our lives as well as a positive one.

The purpose of the negative course of action is to prevent our positive acts from interfering with those very rights which we concede to others. The only way this is made possible is by assigning *order* to human relations. This *order* becomes a product of the human intellect. The order consists of an established sequence for the demands and rights of individuals. In other words, the order of human relations shall be founded upon provisions of time and space. Let us further elucidate. Suppose I have a positive requirement—a basic need which is necessary to my being, such as we have explained; you have a positive requirement, as well. The means of fulfillment of that requirement may not be sufficient for both of us at the moment. Which one shall have it? This shall be determined by the time provision, that is, the person who made known his requirement first; or perhaps the spatial provision shall apply—that is, the one who is more adjacent to the supply shall obtain it. The human mind abhors confusion, and seeks order. Order is, psychologically, any arrangement which the mind can readily comprehend. The confusions that result in discourtesy, rudeness, and in a display of the primitive aggression of animals, can be avoided by this application of order to our relations with others.

This application of order to our wants or our desires, does not dispose of the spirit of competition which makes for progress. Each of us may try to be the first to the source of supply, or means of satisfaction. Yet we can recognize the position of another in point of time as preceding us. If one precedes us in time, or in sequence, we will recognize that order.

This sense of order in human relations is expressed even in the so-called "social graces." We will not rudely interrupt another who is speaking, no matter what we wish to say, until he has finished speaking. We will recognize the fact that he precedes us. Without a regulation of the sequence of speech, we know that confusion would arise. Again, where several of us need something, and none of us has preference in point of time or in sequence, then the principle of

equality shall apply. Since, in our original reasoning we have conceded to others the right to the same positive requirements as we have, then they must share equally with us, if the principle of order has not worked against them. Under such conditions there must be a division, an equitable sharing of the advantages to be obtained.

If all of us will use these psychological factors of *order* and *equality* in governing our behavior, a higher code of ethics will ensue. This improvement would reflect itself in the broader aspect of human relations, namely, international affairs. Without compliance with such principles, we have nothing more than a society of individuals living together, but in practice, working against each other.

Fraternally,

RALPH M. LEWIS,

Imperator

Can Happiness be Universal?

From Thebes Minor Lodge in Detroit, Michigan, came the following question: "What steps can one take to overcome periods of depression and material suppression? How does one reach that mental state of happiness whereby it may be transmitted to members of one's own family or to others?"

The content of Happiness, like that of *good* and *justice*, has been the subject of philosophical inquiry and speculation for centuries. Frequently in the history of thought, happiness has been held to be the *summum bonum*, the *highest good* in life. In all such instances happiness has been identified with pleasure; consequently, it made the end of life, the purpose of existence, according to some schools of thought, the attainment of pleasure. The ancient philosophical school known as the Cyrenaic, founded by Aristippus, is an excellent example of such thought. Aristippus did not disagree with Socrates, who preceded him, in believing that virtue was the highest good to be sought in life. But in effect, Aristippus propounded the questions: Why should virtue be sought? What benefits are to be derived therefrom? To him it seemed that the virtuous man was one who had found good in all things and goodness was *pleasure*. Men

wanted virtue, or goodness, because it meant a pleasurable state; thereupon goodness and pleasure were made the end in life to be sought. If, Aristippus further contended, goodness is identified with pleasure, then all men will understand the object of their search, namely, why they want goodness, or happiness, as end of life. All men can understand the satisfaction and gratification of pleasure. That which is good for me is that which makes me happy, affords me pleasure. Men should seek to fill each fleeting moment with pleasure. All happiness is ultimately a pleasure of the body—taught the Hedonists, another school of ancient philosophy.

This attitude constitutes a *positive search* for pleasure wherever it may be found. It was soon realized that an unbridled pursuit of happiness may result in ill-health, pain and suffering. For this reason, the Cyrenaics recommended an intelligent indulgence of bodily pleasure. Other thinkers inveighed against this view. They held that bodily pleasures are not positive; that they *are* only directly in proportion to the satisfaction they give. We must first have the desire; as the desire is satisfied, the pleasure diminishes proportionately. For example, before we can enjoy the sensation of scratching an itch, we must first have the itch, with its aggravation; with the scratching, the pleasure diminishes. Therefore, bodily pleasures were held to be strictly negative, constituting a removal of an annoyance. Of these bodily sensations, Socrates said: "Each pleasure and pain is a sort of nail, and rivets the Soul to the body and engrosses her"

Mental happiness, or pleasure, is said to be more enduring. It increases in intensity with the use of the intellect. In fact, the mind is never fully satisfied with its interests. The things which please the mind or the talents, stimulate mental happiness instead of completely satisfying it. Every ideal that we have, when gratified, gives rise to another. Thus we are led to search for and to realize states of greater happiness. The appetites, conversely, wane, or become jaded, if over-indulged. Mental pleasure grows in intensity with the exercise of the mental self.

There are, as well, what are called the moral pleasures. Each person has certain moral impulses or conceptions of right and wrong which stem from what we call *con-*

science. The sense of rectitude, the realization of righteousness, provides a tremendous inner satisfaction when it is gratified. Unlike the pleasures of the body, it reaches no crescendo nor falls into a diminuendo. Rather, it continues to remain with us as a tranquil state of mind—an at-peace-with-the-world feeling.

From all of the foregoing we can see that happiness is not endemic with certain people. Everyone can enjoy happiness — can have certain kinds of pleasure. There is a graduated scale of happiness. There are the pleasures of the body, pleasures of the intellect, and pleasures of the soul. Each of us is ultimately seeking for himself true happiness. There is no higher good than that harmony with our being which produces pleasurable sensations. However, the various kinds of happiness, or pleasures, since they are on a graduated scale, are not equal to each other. The pleasures of the body are transient, evanescent; we can only drink and eat a certain amount or indulge our appetites to a certain limit. When our appetite has been gratified, we must wait for the pangs of desire before we can again experience the pleasure attached to removing these pangs. All persons have such pleasures; they are necessary to the body. To a grossly physical and sensuous person, they are the full content of happiness. Such a person cannot realize the higher and finer happiness of life. The pleasures of achievement, of fulfilling a creative or mental urge, are unknown to him. Such persons are bound to know—if they live long enough—periods of *great despondency* when old age or ill-health overtakes them and they no longer find it possible to gratify their appetites as they once did. Life has few, if any, pleasurable moments to them. There are no periods of ecstasy to offset pain and the irritation of sheer monotony. Little can be done for such persons. They are destined to learn, unfortunately, that they hitched their life to a star that eventually vanished.

Mental or intellectual pleasures can be experienced even in very old age, provided there is no degree of ill-health, and that there is a freedom from intense suffering. Whereas, the pleasures of the body come from gratification of certain appetites, the mind, on the other hand, can establish desires which are always commensurate with its ability to

satisfy them. In his youth, a man might find pleasure in rigorous intellectual pursuits; in old age, he may find them in less rigorous mental efforts, but the pleasure or satisfaction will be the same. The intellectual, often a materialist in his younger days, becomes quite philosophically minded in his later life; he finds happiness in reflecting upon and understanding his own being and his relationship to the universe of which he is a part. The mentally alert person is inclined in his later life to find pleasure in conforming to the impulses of the psychic self, more so than is one who had indulged for years only his grosser appetites and passions.

Man must experience the happiness of each state of his being, and all of these states constitute *complete happiness*. Pleasures of the body, mind, and self are all necessary. Those of the body, however, must not be pursued, but indulged only for necessity. In other words, we should not try to acquire an itch so that we can scratch it. I do, however, without hesitation scratch an itch when it is felt. Mental and spiritual happiness are pleasures which can be experienced by the young and the old alike. Each member of a family can experience a sense of righteousness in conformity with his conscience. Each can find pleasure in exercising his talents, no matter how they may vary. Happiness certainly is prevalent in a home in which, for example, the father and son are pursuing a hobby of radio construction or photography, in their home workshop, and the mother and daughter are participating in the playing of musical instruments, or in painting or writing.

The true way of transmitting happiness to others is to help them to find lasting pleasure. Help someone to discover his talents, to awaken his latent abilities so that he may know the real joys of creative activity.

As Rosicrucians, we are quite aware of the effects of our own auras upon those of others. If we allow ourselves to become depressed or irritable, it affects those in close association with us. Radiant happiness is likewise contagious. It is stimulating to the auras of others. If we are cheerful, other people experience pleasure in our presence. Happiness, however, being a personal experience, requires certain incentives and action on the part of the individual. Happiness must come about because we place ourselves in a posi-

tion to receive it. We cannot enjoy an excellent meal without preparing it, or, at least, arranging or planning to partake of it. We cannot experience mental happiness without some ideal, some objective which we have formulated and which can be realized only by making the effort to do so. We cannot experience spiritual happiness, Peace Profound, without contemplating the inner self, and periodically reflecting upon our own moods, and understanding our psychic urges.

We must avoid endeavoring to find happiness by mere passive living, attempting to avoid the rigors of life, the responsibilities of doing. Happiness consists in knowing more of, rather than in avoiding, all the irritations of life. It is an extremely negative attitude to wish to retire from the turmoil of life. Such people believe, figuratively, that if they could lock themselves within a glass house, far removed from all the experiences of life, that happiness would be theirs. From the same reasoning, we might say that a man who is asleep is in happiness, if he does not dream, because he experiences nothing to make him unhappy. Such was the erroneous philosophy of the ancient Cynics. One of their statements, though true in part, was greatly distorted in practice. This statement was: "You, Antiphon, would seem to suggest that happiness consists in luxury and extravagance; I hold a different creed; to have no wants at all is, to my mind, an attribute of godhead; to have as few wants as possible, the nearest approach to godhead." This, as I have said, has been carried to extremes. It was interpreted that man should not concern himself with government, patriotism, and responsibility for the family, should not fight for what is said to be right—for all such actions or desires were said to interfere with a nonresistant state of mind which they called *happiness*. Obviously, such an attitude, if persisted in, would disrupt and ruin society.—X

Religions and Populations

A not infrequent question is again expressed by a Frater who asks if we know how many types or kinds of religions there are in the world. This inquiry brings up another question and that is as to how much space should be given to the discussion of religion in this Forum. Almost every issue carries

one or more answers to questions having some bearing upon religion.

All questions in *The Rosicrucian Forum* are taken from perplexities expressed by members, sometimes directly, and other times by implications in their correspondence. Consequently, it is the desire of the Supreme Officers that the *Forum* reflect the real interests of the majority of members, and if questions concerning religion are wanted, they will be included with other questions. On the other hand, if members wish subject matter confined strictly to the interpretation of the Rosicrucian teachings, that policy will be followed, provided the questions of the members conform to this indication. Do not hesitate to make your interests known insofar as you wish certain matters discussed in the pages of the *Forum*.

This particular question as to the number of kinds, types, or varieties of religions is one which might appear to appeal to a statistician rather than to the philosophically minded individual. I have not attempted to locate in any reliable reference book a record of just how many types and varieties of religions there are. From the statistical standpoint, this might be of interest to some people, but from a rational standpoint, it makes little difference whether there is one or whether there are one million kinds of religions in the world today.

There is a question arising from this direct issue which is of more importance to thinking men and women, and that is, "Why are there different types of religions?" In other words, the more important issue, insofar as the study of human nature and human thought is concerned, is "How can it be that so many types of responses to a Supreme Being exist?" If we are to work upon the premise that a Supreme Being or God is the primary mover of the universe and exists as an individualized entity, then how are we to reason why He is interpreted in so many ways? Some might believe that if an infinite God exists, a God who is all-wise and who has created and established all things, would it not seem logical that that very God would instill intuitively and instinctively in the minds of His creation a concept of Himself that would be in accordance with the true reality of Himself?

Since no man seems to be positive of the complete nature of God, and since so many interpretations of Him and the practices related to His worship seem to exist, there might be those who would conclude that God is not infinite and all-powerful—that He is not an individualized entity at all, but merely an impersonal force which man has tried to interpret in accordance with his own particular environment, viewpoints, and native intelligence. While these seem to be logical premises, upon analysis they do not hold as much force as one might think. There can be one God, but still that one God manifests in many ways through His own creation. Light is changed by merely passing through a piece of glass, whether that glass be a lens or a window made up of multi-colored glasses. Other even more tangible things can be changed, depending on the medium upon which they are founded. Is it, therefore, not to be believed that the highest force in the universe cannot be changed insofar as His interpretation is concerned, and dependent upon the point of view of the perceptor?

Possibly this question can be brought to a somewhat nearer point of solution by accepting the idea that true religion is a progressive thing. There has been too much of an attempt on the part of those who hold to some religions to claim that their interpretation of God, that their concept of religion alone is the one that is correct. Probably almost all religions have to some extent used this point of view. Might it not be better to consider the possibility that no religion that has existed so far has been perfect, but that each one has, in a sense, reflected a part of the truth in accordance with the interpretation of its adherents. In such a case we find religion is definitely progressive and that through the ages forms of religions should become closer and closer related to the true source which they try to reach. We have found this true to a limited extent even in the history of man. The modern concept of most religions is probably broader than it has been at any other time in history. By broader we mean that the emphasis placed upon ethical and moral values is on a higher scale, that the spiritual values are exalted above physical, and that man is realizing more and more that his contact with God must be a personal experience—such would

indicate progress in religion, although the highest ideals of all religions have held to these premises before.

The manifestation of religious belief has definitely run in accord with human understanding and parallel to human development of understanding as to other values. The savage had very crude concepts of religion. Anything which he could not comprehend, from the manifestation of the seasons and change in weather to the physiological processes in his own body, was assigned directly to the intervention of a deity. His religion gradually developed around superstition, or rather, mistaken beliefs in connection with facts. Various festivals developed around the time of change in seasons, for man believed that the seasons would probably change if he paid proper respect to the particular deity or power that had control of them.

Even without a study of ancient religions, by using our imagination and judgment, it is very easy from these simple facts to go ahead and construct in our own minds some of the principles of man's early religion. We can imagine how certain practices, superstitions, and ceremonies developed, and we can even find in modern life remnants of these particular practices. It is said that Christmas, which falls soon after the beginning of winter, is a remnant of an observation held by men in the past to appeal to the gods for a return of spring and summer. More advanced forms of religion later developed from these early primitive forms. These developed primarily in four ways, and according to the stress that was placed upon moral values, ethical values, spiritual values, and the mystical attainment. Early primitive religion gave little consideration to the individual in relation to his God. It was more like a community or a population problem; that is, a whole group dealt with the forces necessary for existence.

As the concept of religion developed, realization of moral and ethical values became established, because at the same time as man forms himself into communities and political groups, religion gradually comes to the support of these socialized trends by establishing ethical and moral standards for behavior and the dealing of one man with another. As man began to think of himself as an individual in relation to others of his group,

as well as of a group of particular people as a whole, his ideas of religion began to tend toward his personal relationship with God. Therefore, with religious developments came the idea of individual spirituality. This is, in a broad sense, a term which we can use to explain that man began to think of values and whether or not his physical and material needs were not secondary to those of his life or spiritual values.

Mysticism developed among the few. Mysticism is an extreme form of individualistic religion when interpreted in the religious sense. It is the other extreme of the primitive form through which the population as a whole dealt with God at the point where the individual was concerned in lifting himself to a plane of contact with God. This subject should be treated by itself, separately from the general treatment of religion.

A few of the principles sketched here can be illustrated in some populations of the world. In China, for example, two types of religion developed prior to what we know as the *Christian era*—one of which was originated by Confucius. The religion of Confucius was primarily the practice of certain ethical and moral principles. It was idealistic but did not reach to any great extent the concept of the development of the individualistic outlook or the spiritual growth of the individual man. The teachings of Confucius were not conducive to a mystical viewpoint. Another trend in China were the teachings of Lao-Tse. This concept was definitely mystical, and for that very reason was slower in becoming established. The Chinese have a tradition that at one time their country existed in a Golden Age, when moral, ethical, and political problems, as we know them today, did not exist. Of course this, in a sense, is only an allegory.

Lao-Tse, in his teachings, developed this concept, but his concept was that that Golden Age was a period when man still walked on a par with God. In other words, it corresponds somewhat to the Christian concept of the era of Adam and Eve before the fall. Lao-Tse, therefore, taught that man, by developing his inner self and lifting his spiritual level, could return to that true relationship with God which man was capable of attaining. We see here a definite mystical trend. From this concept what is known as *ancestor worship* has been

developed, although it is somewhat poorly interpreted by Western peoples.

Probably the most far-reaching religion in the world was that of Buddha. Even to this day, if our Frater who asked the question is interested from a statistical standpoint, Buddhism has more followers than any other religion. However, Buddhism, like Christianity, is divided into sects, and pure Buddhism is not prominent in its actual practice in the world. The history and life of Buddha is probably a little better known than that of other religious teachings of the East. Buddha incorporated most of what we might consider to be modern concepts of religion. He combined the ethical and the moral values with spiritual and mystical attainment. He placed emphasis upon the individual attainment of proper relationship with God and the eventual absorption into the Absolute, but he did not overlook the moral and ethical practices necessary for man to carry on a proper and peaceful relationship with his fellow men. Like Christ, Buddha is held as a great exponent of his principles, and insofar as history can show, he consistently and practically followed his own ideals throughout his life after once having determined his course. That is why his life has affected so many and that particular form of religion has grown.

There is no need to go into an analysis of all well-known religions, as much authentic literature concerning them is available to the student of comparative religions. We might say in passing that the other most well-known religions, Mohammedanism and Christianity, together with Buddhism, are probably the most extensive religions in the world today. They each seem, in a certain sense, to fill a particular nook or place in the world of religious thought. For example, Buddhism has kept a stronghold in the Orient, although its effects have been felt in all parts of the world. Mohammedanism has had its strongest effect in the Middle East, although it, too, has moved in both directions, becoming a political factor in India even in the present day, the very country in which Buddhism had its birth. It has moved as far as Spain and has a representation all over the world.

Mohammedanism has been probably the most misinterpreted religion in the world

due to misunderstandings that developed in early history which made Christianity take a decided stand against it, and because of that we in the Western World have built up certain prejudices against the teachings of the prophet Mohammed. However, a fair analysis will show much of the same value in Mohammedanism as is found in other religions. In the Sufi sect of Mohammedanism there is a very high mystical trend.

Insofar as the Western World is concerned, Christianity became its strongest religion. It, too, has its origin in the East, but very early in its history it was modified by Greek influence and philosophical implications of the West so that while within it still exist certain Oriental principles it has been westernized to the point where we do not ordinarily think of it as an Oriental religion. Beginning with the Apostle Paul down to many equally zealous Christians of the modern era, Christianity has been more actively propagandized than any other religion, and it has lifted the life of people to a point of hope that probably no other religion has ever attained.

Today, with these religions and many others which we could enumerate or attempt to survey, we find that man is still struggling much in the same way as he was during his primitive days, to interpret the creative forces of the universe and to describe and understand his God. We must conclude that there is no one path or one system that would be the solution to this problem, for we can glean from all the great religious experiences that there are certain truths and principles that seem to be self-evident, and which man can utilize in a most constructive manner in dealing with his fellow men. With this progress, if we can call it that, in man's development of his idea of God, there has come at the same time great physical advancement and great physical destruction. The basic preception of any progressive religion would have told man not to kill, not to wage war with one another, and therefore probably the future of religious evolution does not depend so much upon the appearance of a new prophet or a new religion as it depends on the fact that humanity must learn to glean the truths and benefits from those which have already been taught, and then look ahead to more subtle truths and principles.—A

Cosmic Language

One of our fratres of long standing addresses our FORUM as follows: "During my meditation periods I try to be as free as possible from objective consciousness. At times I hear beautiful voices or music and see colors which are impossible for me to see with the physical eyes. I learned, years ago, a symbolical language. It took me considerable time to read and to understand it. Even now I do not understand it all. It is something I cannot explain very easily to others. In my opinion the Cosmic tries to speak to me through this language which I experience. If I remember right, I have never anywhere read nor heard a word about such a symbolical language. If there is a Cosmic language, please let me know how I may learn more about its symbology."

This Cosmic language, to which the frater refers, has, in the mystical arcana of the ancients, been called "the language of the soul." Different revered mystics and venerable masters have told of listening to it and then endeavoring objectively to transcribe it in writing. They relate that almost all of their monumental inspired works were spoken or revealed to them in this language of the soul. Frequently persons today have snatches of this language in momentary meditations. They may hear a word or see a symbol from which is derived a great meaning. The Cosmic language, or the language of the soul, is condensed like a shorthand system. Each word or sign is possible of a great wealth of meaning. One such word may become the equivalent of a lengthy paragraph.

Upon first consideration, those who have never had such an experience find it difficult to realize how one word or sign could possibly convey so many ideas in itself. Even ordinary words and signs in everyday usage are capable of that. Certainly a *Cosmic language* would be still more revealing. Examples of words potential with great meaning are *beauty, love, justice*. As you think of any one of them, most certainly a tremendous number of related ideas come to the fore of your consciousness. Then, again, the symbol of the crux ansata, the All-seeing Eye, or the triangle have vast meanings imbedded in them. So it is not strange that if

this is possible objectively and with our temporal language, it is more so in the Cosmic language.

A symbol is a sign or device intended to represent one or more ideas. Symbols are most frequently used to portray in a simple way extensive ideas. The Cosmic language is always in the form of symbols. However, the symbols of the Cosmic language are not always signs, that is, composed of straight lines, curves or dots. Colors and sounds are used as well. The Cosmic language is, to use an analogy, like a magnet that will draw, from the mind, words of our profane language which will correspond to the Cosmic ideas. Obviously, we can only think in terms of our experience. One cannot describe an article as red and blue to a blind man, because he would have no ideas to correspond to such colors, having never experienced them visually. One could not describe certain musical notes to a man who had been born deaf, because he would have no corresponding ideas to realize what one is endeavoring to explain. The Cosmic language, therefore, employs various devices for drawing from the human consciousness ideas which seem to correspond to its impressions.

Sometimes we are communicated with by means of a spectrum of colors arranged in intricate geometrical patterns such as circles, triangles, and rectangles fantastically interwoven. These designs stimulate our psychic selves more deeply than any word can do. The different patterns give rise, within us, to certain profound ideas. At other times the Cosmic language consists of several bars of music. In response to those sounds our consciousness engenders certain ideas. It is as though the various stimuli used by the Cosmic are push buttons for releasing words, words that we know objectively, having read or heard them before, but which are being rearranged in our consciousness to form *new* and illuminating thoughts.

Each of us is more sensitive to one kind of stimulus than to another. Some of us learn principally through an intellectual presentation; that is, we learn more readily if the matter is presented to us logically. It must only appeal to our reason. Others find a purely rational presentation, no matter with what perspicuity it is given, ineffectual. It is easily forgotten. If it is dramatized, if color, music, or art in some form is used so

that it appeals to the emotions, such persons will long remember it. You know from your own experience that this is a true statement. It is for this reason that the Cosmic language is adapted to the sensitivity of each individual nature. It employs the method whereby each individual can best construct an intelligent pattern to conform to the impressions received and thereby understand them.

What is this Cosmic language? From where does it emanate? When the mystics of yore termed it the language of the soul, they were approximating its true nature. It may be said that very often the Cosmic language is the expression of *intuition*. As such it is the innate or *indwelling* knowledge of self. The latent inclinations of the intelligence and life force of our being constitute the sum total of that which is the inner self. The intelligence of our being, which is contiguous to the whole *Cosmic*, is not what we ordinarily think of as knowledge. It is not an accumulation of facts, such as dates, figures, a collection of instances composed of all the particulars of human experience. It is far more general and all-inclusive than that. In fact, it is difficult to find a suitable analogy for it. However, we shall use the piano keyboard for this purpose. We know that the piano keyboard does not consist of a repertoire of musical selections that can be played upon it. It is not limited to a specific number of pieces of music. The keyboard itself, the notes of it, is an integral part of all the compositions which can be played upon it. Yet the keyboard is no one of them. It is finite in its elements, but it is infinite in the variety of their combinations. The self within us consists of certain octaves of Cosmic harmony. An infinite number of forms of mental impressions or ideas can come from the combinations of those octaves. The more evolved the *soul-personality*, the greater is its sensitivity to the variety of combinations of the Cosmic harmony or the Cosmic intelligence within us. During periods of meditation, even though we may not be dwelling on Cosmic principles, we are receptive to the harmonies of this intelligence within us.

Those subtle impressions, which come to us through our psychic centers and by means of the sympathetic nervous system, are translated in our consciousness into colors, signs,

or even words which have objective meaning to us. The higher the octave of the intelligence within us to which we respond, the more profound become the intellectual archetypes, the objective meanings to us. The meanings, therefore, arise within our brains, but they are stimulated by the intangible Cosmic impressions. Intuitive knowledge does not consist of the objective ideas we have of it. It is merely by the psychological process of sensation that intuition is translated into intelligible ideas.

As for learning to understand the Cosmic language, this you will always be able to do. To the extent that the language is communicated to you, to that extent will you understand it. Your own development, your own gradually evolved receptivity will allow more of the language, a greater scope of it, to enter your consciousness. You will never be able to receive more than you will be able to comprehend. The more sensitive you become to it, the more your objective consciousness will be able to find ideas and to shape illuminated concepts automatically to interpret the Cosmic language.

Beware of anyone trying to *teach* you the Cosmic language. As we have explained, the form that it takes is different for each individual. It is entirely dependent upon which one of the psychic centers of the individual's being are more developed. Often we do not ourselves know which centers are the more developed. We cannot say whether the Cosmic language should be in the form of colors, designs, music or intonations to be most effective for us. We cannot say whether the impressions should be complex or few and simple to be most efficacious to us. How, then, could anyone else teach us the Cosmic language? The Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, is teaching you to be responsive to the language and that only. In what form the language will come to you neither we nor anyone else can tell you. *Furthermore*, the expression or form of the language does not remain the same through our lifetime. As we evolve and our emotional, psychic, and intellectual natures change accordingly, so does the form which the language takes to us. It may be expressed in colors to us in our youth, as geometric patterns in middle age, and as intonations, syllables, or words in later life.—X

Concentration and Will Power

So important is the relationship of concentration and will power that it is made a matter of discussion in the first monographs that the Rosicrucian member receives. Many questions that come to us concerning these subjects are treated in more detail than one is able to see on the first reading of these early monographs.

As a member begins his studies he is sometimes too much concerned with the implications of the early teachings to thoroughly direct step by step the material that is presented there. We can not emphasize too much the importance of reviewing these early monographs from time to time, because each member will find in the light of their knowledge an understanding of the principles, as he progresses into the higher degrees, and points that may not have been fully understood or comprehended on first reading will be made clear. This is not to infer that the early monographs are too difficult to understand; in fact, they are simply written, but perspective helps anyone better to understand principles with which they are dealing. A student in any science will frequently return to the elemental phases of that particular subject in order to review and be able to piece together more intelligently the fundamental principles that underlie the particular branch of study and subject matter. Therefore, do not think it is a sign of weakness to return to these early principles.

It is well that each member understands that concentration is related to our studies and their practical use in the same way that physical skills are related to the duties that we perform from day to day. Each of us in our necessary bread-earning occupations or professions learns certain skills without which one would be unable to carry on his daily work. The mechanic learns those skills which have to do with the particular objects or machine with which he works. The carpenter must learn the skills that make effective the use of his tools on wood, for, as we all know, tools and wood alone will not make a carpenter. The surgeon learns his skills in order to successfully carry on his work on behalf of the health and well-being of his patients.

We could go on and enumerate the activities of every individual who has the neces-

sity of earning a living, ever before him and thereby realize how important it is that the skills and aptitudes which we habitually use are very closely related to the condition of our physical existence. In order to apply the illustration, we might say that concentration is to our spiritual and mystical unfoldment what skills are to the demands of everyday life, and therefore, we must gain skill and ability in the process of concentration itself if that process is to be conducive to the type of development which will make a well-rounded existence.

The Rosicrucian concept of concentration is constructive and positive, and, as has already been mentioned the subject of will power is considered in the first reference to concentration in our monographs. The development of concentration as a perfected art is something in which a person can only be directed, just as the various physical skills to which we have referred are aptitudes that have to be developed over a period of time. Furthermore it would be very difficult for a person to describe, to one unfamiliar with this skill, the process of as to how the skill is perfected; and so it is that concentration has to be developed, and no course of instruction or specific rules will bring that perfective condition about.

Will power, however, plays a minor part. Will power is used only in the determination of the individual to set himself to develop the power. In other words, we have to use the power of will to enforce any decision we make. If we decide that a study, such as the Rosicrucian teachings, is the best course for us to follow, then will power is used to execute this decision—that is, to actually pick up the monographs and study them.

This power of will, however, is not identical with the process of concentration. Will power will not change a fact altogether. For example, we cannot overcome pain by the use of will alone. We find that will power frequently cannot overcome emotion, although individuals develop various degrees in the use of will power, but when it comes to contemplating the universe—our place in it, our spiritual capacities and relationship to God—will power is a minor factor. In other words, illumination and Cosmic consciousness cannot be produced by will power—they cannot be forced into existence by merely willing that they be. An excellent

illustration of this fact is given by the philosopher and mystic, Plotinus. In commenting upon contemplation, Plotinus indicated very clearly that it could not be forced—that we could not illuminate ourselves or cause illumination to come into our development merely by willing it. He gave an excellent illustration, stating that contemplation for inspiration and guidance was similar to beholding a sunrise; that if man wished to behold the beauty of a sunrise, he could only sit and watch. Nothing that he could do would speed up the rising of the sun, change its appearance when it once was risen, or in any way modify this law of nature that causes the earth's rotation in such a manner as to bring about the appearance of the rising of the sun each morning. So man, if he wants to behold the beauty and the magnificence of the operation and the laws of nature as manifest in the rising sun, must merely take a position where he is able to behold the particular phenomenon, relax and view the sunrise, being aware that the phenomenon is outside himself and that only his serene contemplation makes possible the realization of the beauty involved.

And so it is with Cosmic illumination. Man, in a sense, must take a position, detached from those things which might interfere with and impede his contemplation of the divine or absolute, and there, fully realizing that he cannot by force of will speed or change the coming about of this illumination any more than he could effect the rising of the sun, serenely await that which will operate in accordance with the Cosmic laws just as sure as will the sun rise in the morning. This does not mean, however, that man does nothing in preparation. Man cannot sit in a darkened room and see the sunrise—he must go outside; he may even have to climb a hill or make other physical preparation to be ready. And so it is with illumination; man must prepare through obtaining knowledge of God's laws, insofar as he is able to comprehend them, he must desire the illumination, he must develop the skills and aptitudes that will put him in a receptive position. He must also develop those abilities of concentration that make it possible for him to direct the usefulness and native power of his mind in such manner as will be receptive to that which comes.—A

The Influence of Fetishes

A soror in Minnesota now addresses our Forum. She says: "I have a copy of the Master Jesus painted by our late Imperator, a picture that is more than a portrait to me. When I am in trouble or something bothers me, I stand before his likeness and ask for help. It is not long after my request is made that the answer comes.

"Daily I watch the face, and I can always tell what is ahead by the expression. At times he seems to smile at me, and then his face grows sad when things are not right, especially when my thoughts are not what they should be. When I try to correct myself the happy look again appears. When I make a plea for help, his aura almost reaches beyond the picture frame. Do I imagine it, or can it be true, this marvelous contact?"

The soror has had a psychological experience common to man since the earliest times. It is related to man's primitive nature. An understanding of the phenomenon makes it useful. On the other hand, a misunderstanding of it has been the cause of many superstitious beliefs.

Technically, looking upon an *inanimate* object in the belief that a spirit or intelligence is resident within it and exercises an influence is known as *fetishism*. Fetishism is part of the practice of many primitive religions and is, of course, related to magic. Primitive man finds it difficult to distinguish between animate and inanimate things. The functions which we ordinarily associate with living things he considers their natural qualities but not as being solely identified with life. Therefore, the qualities of an inanimate thing—a stone, for example—its hardness, its glistening, even its shape, may also be considered the life or the *spirit* of the stone. Each thing, to the primitive mind, is dual. It is animate, alive. Its attributes, its qualities, the things it seems to do or the purposes it appears to serve, are held to be its immanent spirit. Thus, for example, a blue stone is thought to want to be blue; its spirit intends it to be so. A tree falls in the forest not because of an external force, such as wind or because of a physical defect, but because its spirit causes it to do so.

It took centuries of time and an analytical bent of mind before man could define the

functions of life as consisting of certain attributes. Let us realize that among some primitive people today there is even ignorance of the part which reproduction plays in bringing forth new life. These people are incapable of understanding such common relationships of life.

A fetish was a comparatively later development of primitive reasoning. Man came to conceive that some objects were in themselves inanimate, but at times and under certain conditions they might be infused with a spirit. An object might become the residence of an entity; in fact, some article might have, or be made to have, the power of attracting an external agency to itself, such as an intelligence or spirit, and it would remain bound up within the object. Colored stones, lakes, mountains, gnarled trees, and pieces of pottery have become mediums, to the minds of men, through which certain powers or spirits could be invoked by their priests or medicine men. These fetishes became objects of worship. Some were thought to exercise malevolent, and others benevolent, powers. The word *fetish* is derived from the Portuguese word *feitico* meaning "charm." The early Portuguese explorers in Africa assigned this word to the charms used in this manner by the natives.

Man is very susceptible to the *power of suggestion*. This is due perhaps to his faculty of imagination. Without imagination very few things would convey a suggestion to our minds; in fact, persons with a limited imagination experience very limited living. Each thing they perceive is taken for just the actual impressions which it conveys to their senses. They are unable to perceive in it any subtle relationship to other things. For analogy, one man may look upon a pile of weather-stained lumber for just what it appears to be. Another man sees in that same pile the possibility of its use as an attractive rustic finish for his den or for a summer cabin. One has an active imagination; the other man has not.

The educated man, of course, would not believe that the weather-stained lumber had resident within it the *spirit* of a rustic cabin. He would not believe that, because when looking at it he thought of its use for decoration, a spirit within the lumber had so influenced him. The primitive mind, however,

is incapable of evaluating its own mental processes. Suggestion as a psychological factor is unrealized. Ideas are conceived not as being developed in the mind but as *coming* to it through the agency of a spirit. Therefore, everything which by its nature suggests a thought may become a fetish, an object whose spirit is believed to have communicated the idea. The fact of the matter is that through imagination we see in things just what we *put* into them with our own minds. By association of ideas, the qualities of many things become related to some experiences in memory. Immediately the object comes to resemble or to take on the nature of the memory experience.

Many persons have a photograph of a beloved relative who has passed on. In life, such a relative was perhaps an adviser or a guide to those left behind. They were accustomed to come to this beloved relative for consultation and comfort when faced with a problem or some distressing difficulty. The remarks of the relative would approve or reproach certain conduct, and thus the person would come to react to the words and expressions. Sometimes he would be encouraged by what had been said, and sometimes chagrined.

After the relative's transition the member of the family, when confronted with a problem to which he did not feel adequate or when seeking inspiration, would turn to the photograph of the deceased. He would gaze intently at it, wondering just what this beloved person would do or advise under such circumstances. The one standing before the photograph would be honest with himself, and in his own mind he would frankly admit his errors and all of the circumstances relating to them. He would hold nothing back. He would stand before the photograph like one standing before a priest or any object or person venerated, making a prayer of confession or intercession.

Mystically he would actually not be communing with the photograph but with his own inner self! Objectively, he would be reviewing his own conduct and thoughts, and sincerely asking to be helped, to be counseled --and perhaps forgiven. During this brief period of meditation he would be illumined by the impressions coming to him from his own conscience, his *own soul - personality*.

Such mystical illumination causes resultant emotional reactions. As the petitioner stands before the photograph, either he feels happy and relieved of a burden, or quite contrite and sad because of his former conduct. As he psychologically and emotionally experiences these sensations, his imagination reacts to them. He seems to see in the face of the personality, in the photograph, changes of expression, physical changes, which correspond to his own feelings. The face seems to smile back at him kindly or to frown or look sad.

In such experiences the suggestion comes from the individual himself. Imagination then translates it to the photograph. Actually, therefore, the photograph has become a *fetish!* It has become an instrument by which man is caused to practice introspection, to introvert his consciousness. The photograph is unknowingly used to effect an excellent mystical experience. Looking upon the photograph helps to induce the state of *humility, sincerity, and devotion* which are necessary for a truly mystical state.

In the particular case which we are considering, the soror was using the photograph of the painting of the Master Jesus for this purpose, even though she did not realize its psychological significance. She went to the photograph whenever she was motivated by a sincere desire to be helped or to be guided. What the photograph represented to her was instrumental in purging her of all hypocrisy and all perfidy upon such occasions. She would stand in humility before her own self and its Cosmic alliances. All that transpired was *within* her. Actually, of course, the photograph was not altered in its physical appearance.

I have had similar experiences many times. We might say that this is a beneficial influence of fetishes. It is highly essential that everyone know the psychological and mystical principles which are involved. If we unwittingly deceive ourselves into believing that the photograph is actually changing its expression and that the experiences which arise are being transmitted by the personality of the photograph, then we are slipping into superstition and magic. Unfortunately, often when the person learns the reason for these things, it robs him of the former results which were had. The shock of disillusionment makes it impossible for him to use the photograph in exactly the same way, for some time.

However, this can be overcome by looking at the photograph to prepare oneself for the inner mystical state. Look upon it as representing that which you love and respect. Use it as an incentive to be honest with yourself. Then close your eyes, and you will have the same original feelings, depending, of course, upon your emotional reactions at the time.

—X

What Rosicrucians are Doing

We are often inspired by the letters we receive from our fellow Rosicrucians throughout the world. Not only do these members represent every trade and profession but many of them are making valuable contributions in numerous fields to the cultural advancement of mankind. It is especially gratifying to know that many of their activities are prompted by their Rosicrucian membership and their consequent study of the teachings. The results of some of their achievements find their way into the teachings of the Order as contributions to the heritage of tomorrow from our day. Each of us has read one or more of the Pronunziamenti which are periodically sent throughout the degrees. Very few of them are prepared by the Staff here at the Supreme or Grand Lodge. The majority are the result of the efforts of fellow members throughout the world—members who are part of our International Rosicrucian Research Council. Each member of that Council is a specialist in his own field—chemistry, physics, psychology, biology, art, and music. Each contributor is, of course, a Rosicrucian. These individuals have integrated their Rosicrucian teachings with their own technical training. Their special research, in many instances, has brought forth facts, points of knowledge, which are still unknown generally, outside of the Rosicrucian Order. Such information is incorporated in these Pronunziamenti as special presentations of new findings confirming and advancing our teachings.

Aside from these Pronunziamenti, I want to acquaint you with some of our fraters and their contributions, which are representative of the efforts of many and which are highly commendable. Dr. Stanley K. Clark is

professionally renowned as a *gastroenterologist*. Simply defined, he is a specialist in that branch of the medical profession devoted to the diagnosis of stomach and intestinal disorders. For years he was prominently associated with the Henry Ford Hospital. Subsequently, he went into private practice as a specialist in Toronto, Canada, where he now resides and enjoys a large practice. Frater Clark has been a Rosicrucian for years. His special services in behalf of the Order have caused him to be nominated as Grand Councilor for Eastern Canada, which position he graciously accepted and the duties of which he has faithfully fulfilled. Dr. Clark recently sent us copies of a beautifully inscribed writing by himself, entitled: "A Physician's Prayer." This placard is illustrated with two Rosicrucian candlesticks with lighted candles, one on either side of the wording, and symbolizing the light which it sheds. Across the top of the placard is the design of the *crux ansata*, the Egyptian looped cross. Most inspiring, however, are the contents of the prayer itself. It not only conveys the true spirit of a real physician, one desirous of alleviating human suffering, but discloses, as well, an excellent comprehension of the Rosicrucian principles and the mystically enlightened mind. I sincerely regret that limitations of space do not permit our publishing it in its entirety here. However, the following passage will, I believe, convey to you its simplicity and touchingly beautiful sentiments.

"God of my heart, Creator of all life, visible and invisible, manifest and unmanifest; Maker of all planets, stars and worlds; Father-Mother of every soul; Thou, God, the all powerful, the all knowing, the ever-present Being, whose dwelling place is everywhere, even in the heart of man; I would talk to Thee and worship Thee this day; attune and harmonize my soul with Thee, so that my physical body may become and continue to be a perfect temple in which to dwell a segment of Thyself.

"God I recognize and believe all healing to be divine. The good I have done and do is because Thou hast blest my efforts, rewarded my faith and the faith of those whom I have served.

"God help me to realize that every patient is a soul, even as myself. By the mystic law of assumption let me be my brother that I

may better know his needs and, knowing them, supply.

"To all acquired and available knowledge, may there be added the Divine gift of intuition so that errors in judgment and diagnosis may grow less and less. Should I through inharmony and loss of perfect attunement with Thee, fail temporarily to interpret and understand my patient's needs, or give to him the wrong advice, then, may it please Thee, God, to speak to and through our patient, to the end that he will be guided not to choose or accept what I may have in error advised.

"God help me to realize that when I have administered unto and treated the physical body of my patient I have but half finished my task. Thou hast taught me that man is a dual being; he is physical and he is also spiritual. Knowing this, help me to be a physician unto this spiritual self."

A copy of Dr. Clark's prayer was sent to a Canadian medical publication, and they were so impressed with it that they immediately asked permission to publish it. Consequently, it will be sent into the home of every physician in Canada.

* * * * *

Frater Joseph Richard Snavely has long been associated with the Hershey Chocolate Company and its printing enterprises at Hershey, Pennsylvania. During his leisure hours he has compiled an excellent work, constituting a contribution to Christian literature. His handsomely bound volume, just published, is entitled, *Verily, Verily, I say Unto You*. The frater explains his book to be "the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth compiled from the four gospels of the New Testament;" and he further explains that "like Jefferson, my purpose was to make clear the teachings of Jesus, of which the world, more than ever, is so much in need today, paring off the amphibologisms, into which the church fathers and others gave their own misconceptions and expressed unintelligently to others, what they did not understand, themselves."

The frater, therefore, has put into one book just those sayings directly attributable to Jesus and which compose his teachings and mission. The book contains a very extensive table of contents. Those individuals who desire to read the words of the great

avatar, Jesus, without a laborious search for them, will find it a most excellent work. The frontispiece is a beautiful color-reproduction by the artist, Ray W. Deets, also a Rosicrucian. The painting is a spiritual conception of the Crucifixion of Jesus, based on one of the letters of Paul to the Corinthians.

* * * *

All of you are acquainted at least by name, with Dr. H. Arvis Talley, physician at our Rose-Croix Institute and Sanitarium. Many of you know him personally, having either received treatments from him at the Sanitarium, or through having attended his classes in biology at Rose-Croix University. Dr. Talley is, by inclination, devoted to research; all of his available time away from his duties and his family is devoted to proving or disproving various theories by which he may add to his font of knowledge and service to the Order. Such research is naturally in accordance with the objectives of the Rose-Croix Research Institute and Sanitarium.

For some time, Dr. Talley has been interested in *encephalography*—the use of sensitive electrical devices for graphing the electrical currents emanated from the neurons of the brain, popularly called *brain waves*. We know, of course, that the human body is a complex generator. Man generates and emits radiations of various frequencies from different parts of his body. Both nervous systems are electrical in function and the neurons (nerve cells) themselves are minute transmitting stations. Dr. Talley has made periodical reports to me as to his findings. He has employed the *electroencephalograph* in other areas beside the cranium, in order to register the electrical discharges from the human body. A recent interesting report from him reads in part:

"I have been working on a series of experiments using the Electroencephalograph to detect the more delicate electrical currents of the body. The entire series of experiments will be carried on over a long period of time; however, at present, I have the results of the first set of the tests which are as follows:

"(1) Electrical energy liberated by the cells of the cerebral cortex radiates from the head in waves varying from six to twenty impulses per second, and running from five to seventy-five millivolts per wave.

"(2) Electrical impulses radiating from the hands are synchronous with the heart beat, that is, from sixty to eighty impulses per minute in the average, healthy adult. These radiations can be picked up outside the body as far away as three inches (I have not tried for greater distance.) At a distance of three inches the wave is as strong as when touching the finger.

"The findings indicate that the electrical emanations from the right hand are definitely negative, while those from the left hand are definitely positive.

"These findings do not necessarily contradict the Rosicrucian theory of the right hand being positive and the left being negative, for it is possible that the Rosicrucian healing energy is of a higher frequency, and, therefore, the negative electrical potential of the right hand, as seen by my findings, might be a necessary factor in attracting the positive V.L.F. to that hand, the reverse being true of the left. However, the absence of the reversal poles in the left-handed individual leads me to believe that the energy flowing to the hands is distributed by the nerve center governing the heart beat. Therefore, the electrical potential of the hands would not originate in the brain; so that the energy emanating from the hands of the left-handed person would be the same as that originating from the right-handed individual. It is possible that one of these rare individuals who have the heart on the right side of the body might actually exhibit a reversal of the potential of the hands."

Why are the potentials from each hand different from that which is related in our monographs? Is this nervous energy which the encephalograph registers quite distinct from the Vital Life Force? Is it of a much higher frequency, and therefore not detected by the instrument yet transmitted along the same nerves? We know that various electrical frequencies can be transmitted in a practical way along a single wire. This principle is used in transcontinental telephone lines. Each of the wires of such lines has many conversations transmitted along it concomitantly. The conversations are of different frequencies and are "unscrambled" at the various telephone exchanges and by instruments similar to radio receiver devices. Each frequency on the wire is then reduced to

the audible frequency of the usual telephone conversation and is put onto the ultimate wire where it may then be heard by the individual for whom it was intended.

* * * * *

If you fratres and sorores are using your Rosicrucian teachings in connection with your trade and profession so as to advance humanity, or if you are doing special research, the results of which would prove interesting and useful to AMORC, please announce it to this Forum. We would like to know of it.—X

Illusions of the Senses

Perhaps one of the most difficult tasks is to convince people of the fallibility of their senses. If a person appears to have normal eyesight and no deficiency in any of his receptor senses, he is usually confident that the world is as he perceives it. As Locke, the English philosopher, pointed out, in his famous essay on the human understanding, most men believe that their senses mirror the external world. They are convinced that things quite closely resemble the ideas which they have of them.

Our consciousness of the physical existence of our bodies and of external objects is a *grand illusion*. The application of reason and analysis to much of what we *believe* and say that we *know* would excoriate this belief and knowledge of its existence to us. There are many self-deceptions which bring to us, for certain intervals of time, consolation, peace of mind, and a false sense of security. Perhaps it is just as well that many persons are not as rational and as analytical about their experiences as they could be. If they were, then one by one they would lose those things, those beliefs and thoughts, which have brought them a certain comfort during the years. The small child finds ecstasy in the expectation that Santa Claus is going to visit him from out a mythical land and shower him with gifts. The older boy or girl is made to find a certain satisfaction in the statement that the stork delivers his newborn sister or brother. Many adults find deep satisfaction in the anthropomorphic concept of God, picturing him as a benign elderly gentleman with a long flowing beard,

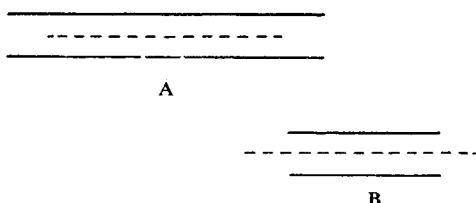
who arbitrarily decides the events of each person's life.

The problem is whether to disabuse such minds with *knowledge* or to allow them the bliss of ignorance. There is always the danger that the shock of reality may make them skeptical of all observation and make life a bitter ordeal. On the other hand, an intelligent parent will eventually inform the child that Santa Claus doesn't exist and that the stork did not bring his baby sister. The tactful method, and the proper one, is to make the person happy in the substitution of the new knowledge. He must be made to realize that it is for his own benefit ultimately to know the *truth*. For analogy, we might walk blindfolded for a considerable distance in order to be spared many unpleasant sights. However, it would not be advisable to advocate such enforced blindness indefinitely, because the very sight that might see unpleasant things could also help us avoid serious pitfalls that would prove to be painful.

Philosophically, it can be sustained that all our conceptions of the actuality of the external world are but illusions. Nothing is as we conceive it to be, matter, space, life and the like. Yet we cannot become like Pyrrho, the skeptic of old, of whom it is said that he had so little faith in what he perceived that he refused to leave the roadside when a vehicle approached and, consequently, was injured. We know fundamentally our senses create within the mind many ideas which we have. They intercept external stimuli and present them to the consciousness in the nature of certain sensations which we interpret in a specific manner. We know psychologically that *spatial* relations, for example, the nearness, farness, smallness, and largeness of objects, depend upon several factors such as direction, extent or size of the stimulating object, and the distance or depth of the stimulus. The three dimensions are very fundamentally related to the structure of the eye itself. What we can and should do, therefore, is to accept these illusions as natural, as necessary to our welfare. They arise directly out of our organic structure. We cannot annihilate our senses and still live in a physical world. However, when it is known that we compound our illusions by wrong interpretations or by confusion of the normal sensa-

tions, we should then correct such errors. The purpose of the following is, therefore, to acquaint you with a number of common illusions, and by this means we hope to have you question every empirical experience before adding it to your category of dependable knowledge.

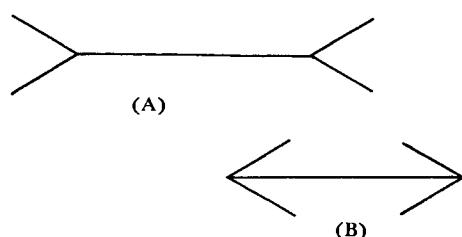
First, it is appropriate to distinguish between *illusion*, *delusion*, and *hallucination*. Delusion refers to false judgment and error in belief. Likewise, illusions must not be confused with hallucinations. The latter refer to the apparent perception of something when there is no corresponding organic stimulus. Perhaps the commonest form of illusions are optical ones. These illusions frequently occur in geometric patterns. They are expressed in errors of length, area, direction, and curvature. These illusions are due to false perception of the patterns of lines. They occur because we attempt to reconcile parts of a figure to the whole figure or pattern, and thereby visually distort the part. *Contrast illusion* offers an example. The person standing between two tall people looks shorter than he is. We offer the following illustration. Study A and B below.



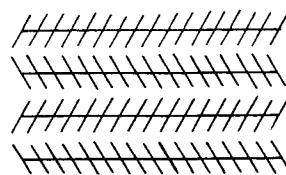
Is the dotted line longer in A than in B? Measure it. It appears longer in A only because of the contrast of the shorter continuous heavy lines.

There are theories which have been offered as an explanation of how we are confused in our visual perceptions. The first of these theories which we shall consider is called *eye movement*. It is generally assumed that the impression of length is gained by moving the eye along the object so as to follow from one end to the other. The vertical movement of the eye as it looks upward at a vertical line requires considerable effort. The vertical line will consequently seem *longer* than a horizontal line of equal length. Again, if the outward ends of

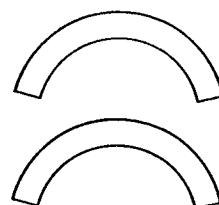
a line attract the eye, that is, cause the movement to exceed the length of the unaltered line, the latter (A) will seem *longer* because the eye has included the ends with the center. Conversely, if the ends of the line turn inward, the movement of the eye is confined between the two inner extremes and the whole will seem shorter (B). Note the illustrations below.



The illustrations under C show illusions caused by changing the direction of the oblique lines passing through horizontal ones. It will be noted that, although all the lines are horizontal, they seem to turn upward or bend downward.

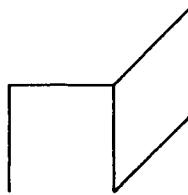


The lines of the arcs drawn below are identical in length, but it appears that the upper arc is smaller, because its shorter line is immediately above the longer line of the lower arc.

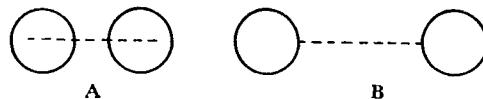


Still another theory of illusion is known as the *perspective theory*. A line drawing suggests objects in three dimensions, length, breadth, and depth. Some lines may be of equal length but, if they are used in the drawing to suggest perspective, they may

seem to be either longer or foreshortened. For example, study the illustration below. All lines are equal. The one suggesting depth, however, appears longer.



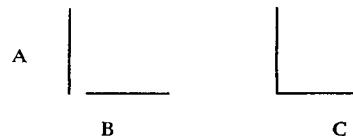
The *confusion theory*. It becomes very difficult to judge the lines and angles of a figure, because the observer is engrossed in the appearance of the figure as a whole. He looks upon the figure as a unit. He finds it difficult to rid himself of the total impression that carries over from an observation of the whole figure. These impressions which are brought over are *added* to the ones he has of the line which he imagines he is judging singly. Consequently, there is the illusion that the single line is longer than it actually is. This principle is illustrated below. The two dotted lines in Figures A and B are of the same length. It will be observed, however, that the dotted line in Figure B seems to be of greater length.



Habits, of course, contribute greatly to many illusions we experience. With continual reading, for example, we react to the stimulus of the *word patterns* instead of to single words. We read a whole line at a time, not for its component words, but for its meaning. Consequently, a sentence may often have errors of spelling or other typographical mistakes which we do not see at all. The stimulus of the single word is lacking. A proofreader follows a different reading arrangement. He reads for words instead of ideas and yet it is difficult for him to break away entirely from the stimulus of patterns of thought. In other words, he sometimes continues to grasp whole sentences for their meaning and does not see misspelled words or errors in punctuation.

Another optical illusion is that known technically as *phi-phenomenon*. We know, of course, that motion pictures are not con-

stantly in motion though they seem so to the eye. There are intervals of a fraction of a second when the motion picture screen is absolutely *black*. The projector throws on the screen a series of *still* photographs. These are interrupted by the shutter of the projector causing intervals of darkness. We are not conscious of the darkness, and the alternation between it and the still photographs causes the illusion that the pictures are *moving*. The consciousness retains for the fraction of a second the image that is held on the retina of the eye and then the picture is followed, after the dark interval, by another picture. They are so united in the mind as to create the illusion of constant motion. Tests of this phi-phenomenon or the illusion of motion have been made with the following illustration:



Illustrations A and B are flashed on and off rapidly on the screen. If there is a fairly long interval between the two flashes, as 150 milliseconds (thousandths of a second), lines A and B seem separated, as shown above. If the flashes are cut to 20 milliseconds, the lines seem to form a right angle; that is, lines A and B are united. If the interval is 60-90 milliseconds, then, to the sense of sight, A appears actually to *move* over to join B, as shown in Illustration C.

The olfactory sense is also subject to illusion. The examples to follow, however, are due to *suggestion* as well. Our susceptibility to suggestion is principally dependent upon the faculty of imagination. An active imagination will combine simple ideas readily to form new and complex ones. The syncrasy of the imagination is not always voluntary. Often we do not realize what is occurring and the suggestion may, therefore, be quite misleading at times. For example, a test was made by having several persons smell, successively, three strong odors, namely, peppermint, wintergreen, and ethyl alcohol. Then the subjects were given ten bottles to smell, having been told that they had a delicate scent of two of the three odors. The subjects were requested to name

the scents smelled. As a matter of fact, none of the bottles had any of the three odors. Yet the majority of the persons professed to have smelled one or more of them.

Illusions of the tactile sense are easily accomplished with the aid of suggestion. A subject's hands are placed in a bowl of liquid which contains electrodes. A current starts through the primary coil and then slowly the second coil is pulled up until the subject feels a very definite shock. Next the subject is told that he is going to be tested for his sensitivity to electric shock; that is, it is going to be determined how slight an electric current he will be able to feel. He is requested to immediately announce the slightest stimulus from the electrodes. At this time, unbeknown to the subject, the current is switched off from the primary coil. When the secondary coil is slowly pulled, the subject will exclaim that he feels the current which in reality does not exist.

Imagination is extremely useful in our living for it extends the possibilities of all that we perceive, by suggesting new forms into which it may be assembled. Without imagination, we would be bound strictly by the immediate qualities which things present to our senses. However, we must also realize that imagination, not directed by reason, becomes *fancy*, as has been well stated in our Rosicrucian monographs. It can, under such circumstances, become harmful because of the illusions which arise from it. Take your fountain pen and shake a drop of ink from it, so that it falls from the height of a few inches onto a white sheet of paper. As you look at the ink spot, its form will immediately suggest to your imagination several designs. It will seem to resemble many different things. If you did not exercise reason, you might think that the ink spot is other than what it is. On the other hand, if, after several attempts, an ink spot does not suggest something to you by its design, your imagination is lacking and it follows that your creative ability is constricted. There is an old adage to the effect that there is none so blind as he who will not see. Seeing with the mind, however, is equally important as seeing with the eyes. Unless we exercise our inner perceptions and psychic

faculties, as we are encouraged to do by our Rosicrucian teachings, our eyes and their fellow sense organs may lead us far astray in life.—X

AMORC Sunshine Circles

These comments are prompted by an inquiry from a Soror asking if a Sunshine Circle is the same as a Chapter or Lodge. The AMORC Sunshine Circles, I wish to make clear, are entirely separate and distinct from Lodges and Chapters. We refer members to the Constitution and Statutes of the Grand Lodge for full information concerning the nature, organization, and procedure of Chapters and Lodges.

Obviously, a Chapter or Lodge is a subordinate activity of the Grand Lodge in which rituals, instructions, and other activities are carried on for members of that particular group. The Sunshine Circle, on the other hand, is an entirely different type of activity. It is an activity representative of the humanitarian purposes of AMORC, and is composed of individuals who wish to put into practice the principles which the organization teaches. AMORC, as an Order, has an obligation to put its principles into practice; in other words, to illustrate its theories and ideas through usage. By so doing, the organization assists in the alleviation of human sufferings and problems, and much of this work is done through voluntary groups such as Sunshine Circles, together with the help of the Council of Solace.

The welfare work of the Sunshine Circles, while directed and instigated primarily by members, is also augmented by nonmember friends who are interested in this same type of activity.

The Sunshine Circles are not generally what would be classified as charity groups. In other words, they do not simply carry on charitable activities in competition with other charitable organizations. The Sunshine Circles, as well as giving physical aid to those who need it, try to give spiritual and psychological assistance to those who have nowhere else to turn for assistance and advice.

I am sure that this brief statement of the Sunshine Circle will indicate how worthy

it is for our members who feel that they can give a little time to the support of this work to participate in the activities of a Sunshine Circle. I hope that this explanation may clarify in the minds of other members, who may not be completely familiar with the work of our Sunshine Circles, the general idea and purpose that these groups are carrying out. We will be glad to furnish more information. Make your request to the Director of the Sunshine Circles at Rosicrucian Park. Why not assist in organizing a Sunshine Circle group in your own locality? It can be done whether or not there is a Chapter or Lodge. If there already is a group, we will be glad to put you in contact with it.—A

Proper Posture for Mystical Exercises

The master of the AMORC Thebes Minor Lodge in Detroit, Michigan, directs several questions to our Forum. These were likewise submitted at one of their own conclaves. He rises to ask: "Why are we told to sit with our hands and feet in such a manner as, for example, hands in lap, unclasped; feet separated and flat on the floor? Why are we advised to hold the hands in a cup-shaped manner and at other times on the knees? If we are attending a meeting and are not certain of the kind of people present, would it help to sit with our hands and feet in crossed position?"

There is a meaning for every exercise, rite, ceremony, or ritual advocated in the AMORC teachings. Nothing is suggested or requested to acquiesce to mere tradition, to awe-inspire, or to confound the member. There is an expedient principle behind all instructions given. If the member is not certain of the reason, it is the right attitude, as in this instance, to ask the meaning.

It is often explained in the monographs that environment can be conducive to results at one time and detrimental to success at another. Some experiments require the elimination of the objective consciousness for a brief period. We are then instructed to shut out all impressions of external things coming to our minds through our objective faculties. Visual impressions of lights and moving objects cause the consciousness to be focused on those external stimuli. The sensations of them—the ideas which they

engender in our minds—dominate our consciousness, and it becomes arrested and extroverted; that is, turned out toward them. Under such circumstances it becomes very difficult, if not impossible, to become conscious of those sensations coming from the Cosmic, the minds of others, or our own subjective minds. Auditory stimuli, such as sounds, and olfactory stimuli such as strong scents, are equally distracting where psychic results are to be had. The practice of introverting the consciousness, turning it inward and causing it to be receptive to the ordinary lesser stimuli of psychic vibrations, is sometimes an arduous task.

In addition to establishing a favorable environment, or rising above it, there are certain physiological adjustments which we must make to have success with some of our psychic and mystical exercises. *Posture* is one of these. Obviously a cramped position is not only uncomfortable, but the pressure often causes a tactile sensation, that is, an unpleasant feeling which dominates the consciousness and inhibits it. The consciousness becomes chained to those bodily sensations. For that reason we always recommend a comfortable chair in which to be seated. It becomes possible, then, for you to become more quickly unaware of the chair and your surroundings, and devote yourself to the mystical exercises. It is also advisable to avoid wearing tight clothing that presses on the body and restrains free breathing. For example, fraters are advised whenever it is possible to loosen neckties or even open their shirts at the collar so as to allow an unimpeded circulation of blood in the arteries of the neck. Crossing the legs often puts a pressure in the thigh or calf of the leg which, although slight, interferes with the free circulation of blood. It may take many minutes before you would feel any numbness, if at all, yet the circulation is being disturbed. To forget the body, to temporarily renounce it and devote the consciousness to the psychic self, requires avoiding those things which cause the body to be brought forcefully to your attention.

There is still another and more important reason for not clasping the hands during these exercises. We have explained in our monographs that certain breathing exercises, such as breathing deeply and holding the

breath, bring into the lungs an abundance of the *positive A* element of Nous. What this is, is likewise explained in our monographs. This vital power enters the blood stream and, as has been explained, adds to the vital energy of our bodies. The energy store is thus increased. That part of it which is not consumed by our mental and physical activities, radiates from the body as a very high frequency electrical current. This current radiates from the various parts of the body. It radiates *principally* through the first three fingers—the thumb, the index finger, and the next finger of each hand. These three fingers on each hand constitute the main radiating centers of the surplus energy which is generated in the body. These three fingers have nerves in them which are "connected with the sympathetic nervous system." They are called the *radial* nerves. It is perhaps not by coincidence that they were given that name.

The three fingers of the right hand radiate a *positive* form of this energy in the body, and the three fingers on the left hand radiate a *negative* form of this energy. It is quite noticeable that deep breathing will increase the bodily energy and the discharge from the fingers of the right hand. This has been demonstrated by use of the electroencephalograph—a very delicate instrument for registering minute electrical currents and which is in use in our Rose-Croix Research Sanitarium. The positive energy of the right hand and the negative from the left hand may be united to close the circuit so that no radiations will be emanated from the fingers of the hands. By clasping the hands the positive radiations of the right hand pass up the fingers of the left hand, and those of the left unite with the energy coming from the three fingers of the right hand. This unity of the two polarities of the energy produces various manifestations as explained in our monographs. If we hold the tips of the thumb and the first two fingers of the right hand lightly against those of the same fingers of the left hand while simultaneously taking deep breaths, we will feel in a few minutes a slight sensation of warmth at the finger tips. Under certain conditions, this short-circuiting of the energy when the hands are clasped is beneficial. Its therapeutic and other value is described in our monographs.

At other times, however, this *closed circuit* causes an overcharging of the body with positive energy. When we are so overcharged, it becomes difficult for us to conduct with success many of the mystical exercises, especially those of attunement with the Cosmic and with the Cathedral of the Soul. Therefore, we strongly urge as a requisite of many of the exercises, the keeping of the hands unclasped. Each hand should be placed downward on the knee which corresponds to it, namely, the right palm on the right knee and the left palm on the left knee. Touching the knees with the palms has no significance in itself. It is merely a method for keeping the hands separated and in touch with the corresponding sides of the body. Since the right side of the body normally has a predominantly positive flow of current throughout it and the left side a negative current, the feet should be kept separated for like reasons.

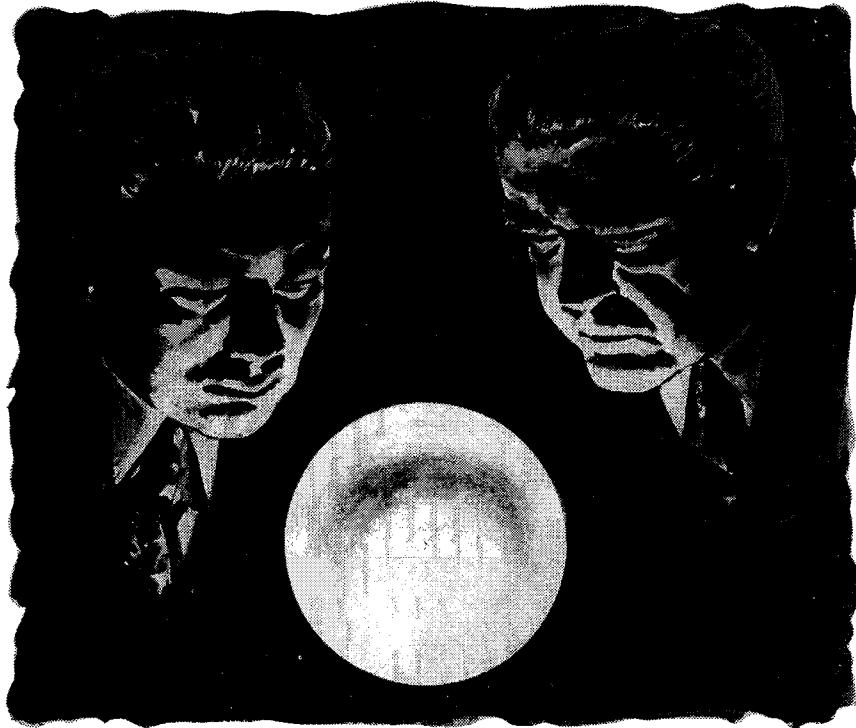
If you are in a group of people whom you do not know personally and wish to conduct *silently* and unostentatiously one of our exercises of meditation or concentration, you should sit in the manner described. However, be certain that your position or posture is unassuming and apparently quite natural. *Don't make yourself conspicuous!* You can appear to be doing nothing different from anyone else. Do not exaggerate the posture. Don't place your feet *wide* apart, and do not lean forward with the arms rigid and your hands pressed tightly against your knees. In fact, you do not have to place the palms on the knees if that would necessitate your leaning forward in an awkward and conspicuous position. Instead, let the palms rest on your thighs as though they were resting in your lap, yet not touching. The fingers need not be stretched out rigidly; such is not important. An *intelligent* and *sincere* Rosicrucian can assume such a posture and yet appear to be seated in the same manner as everyone else present. He will never do anything to detract from the dignity of the Order, for his respect and his love for it are too great.

—X



Therefore, the wise man is he who lives in the wisdom given him by God; lives in the image of the Lord, the same ruling over his planetary and elementary body.

—BENEDICTUS FIGULUS



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